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AMERICAN WEST

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THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW
"WELCOME THE COMING, SPEED THE PARTING GUEST."

Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, January 8, 1876

THE
AMERICAN WEST

THE MAGAZINE OF WESTERN HISTORY

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Midas of New Mexico by Hank and Toni Chapman 4
The Lucien Bonaparte Maxwell Story

The West's Gunmen: I by Gary L. Roberts 10
The Historiography of the Frontier Heroes

The Legendary Concords by S. Blackwell Duncan 16
Collector's Choice

Water, Man, and Nature by Ernest Braun and David Cavagnaro 18
Portrait of the Web of Life: A Color Pictorial

Lion at Bay by T. H. Watkins 30
The Curtain Comes Down on a Western Institution

Incident at Tragedy Springs by Ferol Egan 36
The Unsolved Mystery of the California Trail

A Home for the Spirit by Roderick Nash 40
History of the Wilderness Preservation Movement

Reclamation: In Reply 48
A Matter of Opinion

The American West Review 49

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trapper
hunter
mountain man
army scout
Indian fighter
Indian trader
Indian agent
farmer
friend of Kit Carson

rancher
sheepman
stockbreeder
miner
land baron
millionaire
bank president
judge
great uncle, father brother, to the Ute

MIDAS OF NEW MEXICO

By Hank and Toni Chapman

THAT YOUNG MAN, about 23, who rode into Don Fernando De Taos the other day in 1841 . . . The stocky one with blue eyes and his brown hair tumbling from under a black felt slouch hat . . . He sported a thin moustachio as long as the lip that clamped down on a Connecticut Valley "long-nine" panatella . . . Well, that was Lucien Bonaparte Maxwell, the gringo stranger who didn't own enough land to bury him when he came to the little Mexican town. But he was a man to watch, for he was destined to become a land baron—"with more land than God!"

Maxwell hailed from Kaskaskia, Illinois, a former Indian village fifty miles down the Mississippi from St. Louis. He was educated by the Jesuits, and from the age of fifteen, when his father was accidentally killed during a hunt, he made his home with his maternal *grand-père*, Pierre Menard. When, as a man, Maxwell chose to live in Taos it was because this crude Mexican pueblo—with its staggering streets, its drunken architecture, its burros as numerous as its Mexicans and Indians—was a trapper's town, the rendezvous of just those mountain men he so admired.

Menard was a dealer in furs and pelts, and it had been in his establishment in St. Louis that Lucien, as a child, thrilled to tales of the adventures of the mountain men who made trapping their life—men like Bill Williams ("Cut Face") Sublette, Henry Fraeb, Tom ("Broken Hand") Fitzpatrick, James ("Blanket Chief") Bridger, the Robidoux brothers, Michel Sylvestre Cerré, the Bent brothers, Richens ("Uncle Dick") Wootton, and others as numerous as hairs on a plew (beaver pelt).

At Taos, Maxwell made it known he was for hire. Occupation: trapper. Experience: two years with the American Fur Company. Local references? "See my friend, Kit Carson."

One piece of regional news which Maxwell caught up with on his arrival in Taos would later play an important part in his life. It concerned two esteemed Taos citizens, Mexican-born Guadalupe Miranda and his French-Canadian partner Charles Hipolite Trotier-Beaubien.

These gentlemen had petitioned the Mexican government for a grant of land, declaring "of all departments of the republic, with the exception of the Californias, New Mexico is one

President Maxwell, with stogie, graces this stock certificate, issued upon formation of the First National Bank of Santa Fe.

of the most backward in intelligence, industry, and manufactories. . . . The department abounds in idle people who, for the want of occupation, are a burden to the industrious portion of society. Idleness, the mother of vice, is the cause of crimes which are daily committed. The towns are overrun with thieves and murderers. We think that it will be a difficult task to reform the present generation, accustomed to idleness and hardened in vice. But the rising one, receiving new impressions, will easily be guided by . . . a purer morality."

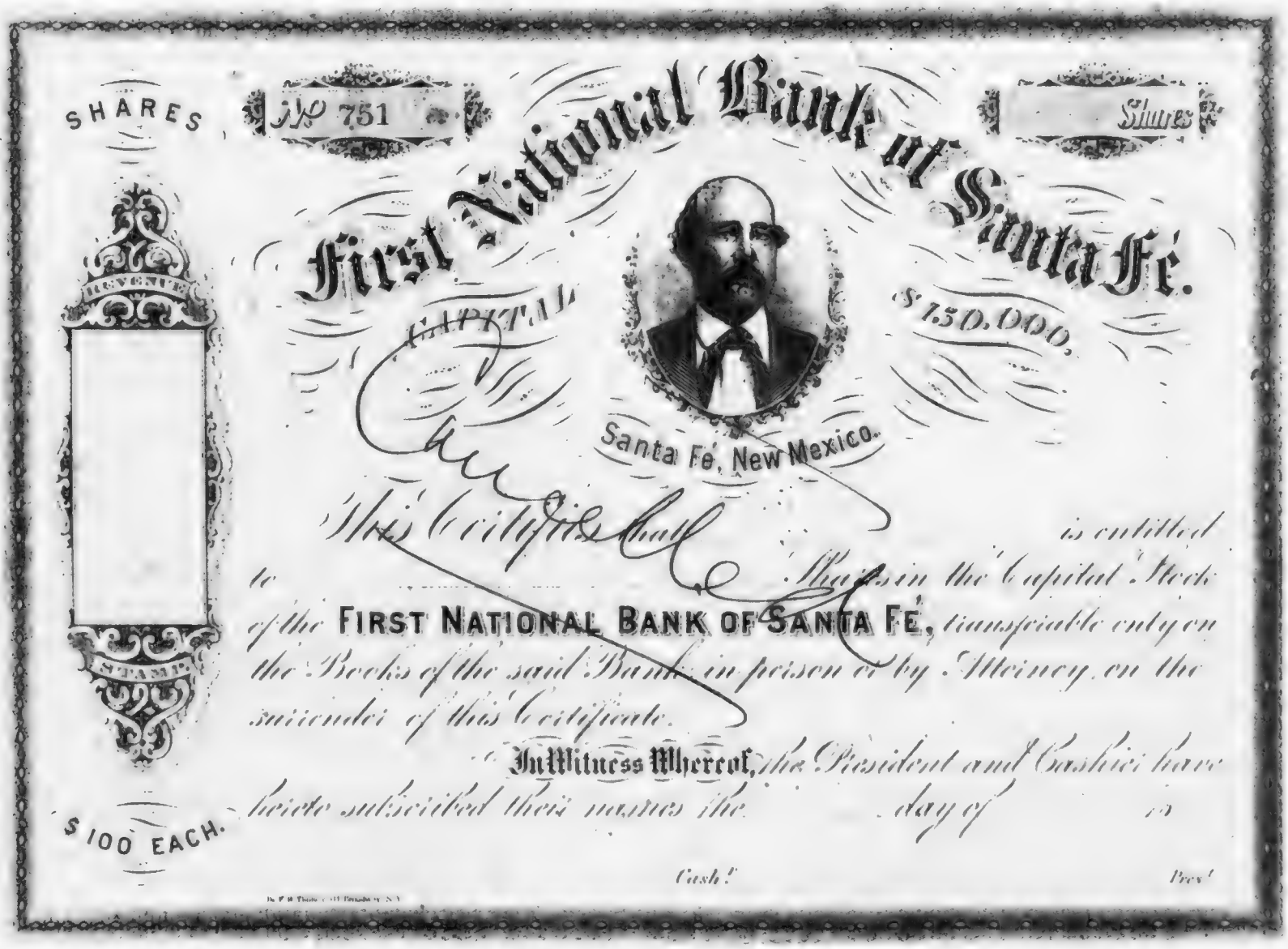
The petitioners proposed to improve the wild land by cultivating sugar beets, establishing manufactories of cotton and wool, and raising stock of every description.

On JANUARY 11, 1841, three days after submission, Governor Manuel Armijo approved the paper. Had His Excellency been truly touched by the conditions and promises in the petition, or merely influenced by the status of the distinguished petitioners? The governor was especially well-disposed toward Don Guadalupe with whom he often shared a decanter of local *aguardiente,* the kegged "Taos Lightning" concocted by "Frenchy" Turley in the only distillery west of the Mississippi.

Neither the governor nor the grantees were even vaguely aware of the acreage involved. In place of accurate measurements, natural landmarks were used to define the extent of the grant, which "commences below the junction of the Rayado River with the Colorado and in a direct line toward the east to the first hills. . . ." The petition's delineation wandered over New Mexico's northeastern geography and into present Colorado with such ambiguities as: ". . . continue to the east of said Una de Gato River to the summit of the table land, from whence, turning northwest to follow along said summit until it reaches the top of the mountains. . . ."

Unknowingly, Maxwell often trespassed the Miranda-Beaubien spread while trapping. The dons were slow in applying for a title and had installed no cornerstones, mounds, or other kind of markers. Maxwell roved over hummocky hills and climbed lofty benches thickly-carpeted with grass, lush with marshy meadows, or rich with lakes, cottonwood, and pine. He saw stark mesas with naked flanks of *dacite* and basalt gleaming in the sun. Sometimes mountains surrounded him,

and Apache — the legendary Lucien Bonaparte Maxwell was all of these



with aspens dancing in the vales and streams brawling in the canyons. Wildlife was everywhere—antelope, deer, elk, mountain lion, bobcat, bear, and buffalo. The parks were scattered with the tepees and wickiups of Ute and Jicarilla Apache camps. Beyond, the horizon rippled with the golden waves of great plains.

From the plains to the top of Baldy Peak's pate at a subarctic 12,441 feet, would take a man about 12 hours on foot. Enroute he would experience the same life zones encountered on an eighteen-hundred-mile trek from the heart of the Miranda-Beaubien grant to Eskimo Point on Hudson Bay in Canada. Even the name "Cimarron" is part of the land. It means "wild, unbroken, untamed." Who would ever want it otherwise? What man would have the audacity to undertake taming the Cimarron?

In June of the following year, Maxwell found employment as a hunter, at seventy-five dollars a month, with an expedition led by Lt. John Charles Fremont to explore "the country lying between the Missouri River and the Rocky Mountains, on the line of the Kansas and Great Platte rivers." Maxwell's *compadre* of earlier trapping days, Kit Carson, signed on as a scout at one hundred dollars a month.

After the four-month expedition, Maxwell and Carson returned to their adopted hometown of Taos. Through Carson, Maxwell became acquainted with the Miranda and Beaubien families. At the time, thirty-two-year-old Carson was courting fourteen-year-old Josefa Jaramillo, daughter of an aristocratic Spanish family. The following year they were married in the Our Lady of Guadalupe Church by the curate of Taos, Padre Antonio José Martinez. (Carson had been married before, to a young Arapaho squaw over whom he had fought a mounted pistol and rifle duel with Captain Shunan, a swashbuckling French-Canadian mountain man—"the only man I am glad to have killed," admitted Carson.)

THAT FEBRUARY, Miranda and Beaubien moved to acquire the document necessary for taking possession of their 1841 grant. Justice of the Peace Don Cornelio Vigil signed the title ten days after the request. Like a phosphorus match, Don Cornelio's pen touched off the verbal salvos of Padre Martinez. "Our land is for the poor not the rich!" proclaimed the fiery curate. "Our people have farmed and ranched that same land since the conquistadores. It is for the blood citizens of New Mexico, not the foreigners!" The battle between the grant and anti-grant factions had begun. It turned friends into enemies, shed blood for decades, and retains bitter memories to this day.

By this time, Maxwell had become more than a casual observer of the scene. His romance with a comely daughter of Charles (Latinized into Carlos) Beaubien bloomed into a wedding. Kit Carson did not see Luz Beaubien as a luscious fifteen-year-old bride; he was out in the wilds, guiding Fremont's second expedition on the third day of June, when his friend Maxwell married woman, dynasty, and history.

Kit Carson, Maxwell's compadre, photographed in 1860 when an Indian agent in Taos. At this time Maxwell was creating his town of Cimarron.

August of the next year saw the newly-weds temporarily separated when Fremont again hired Maxwell and Carson as hunter and guide for his third expedition. They were in Mexican California when the United States declared the annexation of Texas on December 29. Immediately, below the Rio Grande and above the Nueces River, soldiers marched, sabers rattled, and cannons rolled as if to war. Four months later, Mexican General Arista's scouts drew the first blood by ambushing a patrol of General Zachary Taylor's dragoons.

"War exists," President James K. Polk informed the Congress, "and not withstanding all our efforts to avoid it, exists by the act of Mexico herself." On May 13, 1846, Congress issued the declaration of war, as did Mexico ten days later.

Not a shot was fired in defense of Santa Fe, capital of the department of New Mexico, when General Stephen Watts Kearny's "Army of the West" invaded the city in August, 1846. General Armijo, the Mexican governor, had fled, scattering gold and silver coins behind his departing horse to create congestion and foil pursuit. With the governor went his loyal *amigo*, Don Guadalupe Miranda.

In Taos, the fires of resentment, ignited by Padre Martinez's caustic charges against grantees and "foreigners," were fanned into a blaze by the occupation of New Mexico by Kearny's "foreign" troops. To make matters worse, the general appointed Kit Carson's brother-in-law Charles Bent as first U.S.

"Maxwell's Mansion" in Rayado, about 1910. The land was subsequently donated to the Boy Scouts of America, who restored it in 1951.

provisional governor of New Mexico, and Carlos Beaubien, father-in-law of Lucien Maxwell, as a civil court judge.

With the rising sun of January 19, 1847, the flaming resentments erupted into a holocaust of hate and savagery against all Taoseños who were not Mexican or Indian, or who were sympathetic to the foreigners. Mobs of *insurrectos*, led by Tomasito Romero and Pablo Chaves, ramrodded into Governor Bent's home and scalped him. While they shot arrows into his face, Mrs. Bent, her three children, a stepdaughter, and Kit Carson's wife were frantically gouging an escape hole with a poker and spoon in the wall of an adjoining room.

The insurgent army of about two thousand Mexicans and Indians rampaged through Taos looting, scalping and murdering officials, lawmen, and mountain men. Judge Beaubien's son Narcisse, just returned from college, was found hiding in an outhouse with his Indian slave. Both were scalped and slain. While Taos throbbed with this horror, Maxwell and Lieutenant Carson were with the American dragoons in Los Angeles, in the newly-won U. S. territory of California.

Troops from Santa Fe and Albuquerque, and volunteers under Ceran St. Vrain, plowed through two feet of snow to beleaguered Taos. The rebels scattered. One group barricaded itself in the San Geronimo Mission church within the walls of the Taos Indian Pueblo. After a bloody two-day battle, the revolutionists finally surrendered. The leaders were hanged in the town plaza following a trial presided over by Judge Carlos Beaubien.

Charles Beaubien, Maxwell's father-in-law and recipient of the original Miranda-Beaubien grant.

WITH CALIFORNIA secure under the stars and stripes, Maxwell returned to New Mexico. He found the U.S. First Dragoons camped on the Miranda-Beaubien grant at the Rayado River, about fifty miles east of Taos. They were there to protect the traffic along that stretch of the Santa Fe Trail. Ever since his marriage, Maxwell had hankered to build a home in that beautiful grassy valley. Now he seized a triple opportunity to establish a trading post, a settlers' colony, and a ranch. Papa-in-law Beaubien staked Maxwell to the land and stocked the ranch.

Prosperity didn't even bother to knock at the Maxwell *rancho*. It barged in. Cattle and sheep were soon counted by the thousands. Maxwell meat and hay nourished the U. S. troops and horses. Indians frequented his trading post to barter furs and buffalo hides for foodstuffs. The ranch also served as a frontier drive-in for the Santa Fe Trailers in need of sustenance and sundry supplies. Rayado, Maxwell's ranching community, flourished with a growing population of farmers, sheepmen, and ranch hands. Hundreds of acres burgeoned with grain and garden crops.

By early 1848 the men who had built the local military barracks had completed Maxwell's adobe ranch house. He referred to it as his "little Rayado home." To everyone else it was a wonder called "Maxwell's Mansion." Among the twenty rooms, many of which were needed to accommodate his flow-

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ering family, were salons for billiards and gambling, a ballroom, and a dining hall with silver service for thirty guests. Gilt-framed paintings decorated the walls, and the furniture—imported by oxcart—included two grand pianos. The magnificence of the manor was enhanced by the contrast with its frontier ambiance of Comanche, Ute, and Apache Indian country, "where to live is heroic." Not even the civilized presidio of Albuquerque, with its population of one thousand, nor the capital metropolis of Santa Fe, with 4,539 inhabitants, could claim such lavishness.

After the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo terminated the hostilities of the Mexican War, Carson also returned to Taos. Maxwell, familiar and sympathetic with his *compañero's* long craving for farming and ranching, offered Carson land and a partnership in some ranching ventures at Rayado. The thirty-nine-year-old war veteran accepted. Next year he built a traditional Spanish adobe hacienda of seventeen rooms about three miles from Maxwell's mansion.

Maxwell had a natural genius for turning the march of western events into honest profit for the *rancho*. When California shrieked "Gold!" and tilted the country's population westward, Maxwell stayed down on the *rancho* and struck a bonanza selling mules, horses, and supplies to the forty-niners gold-rushing across New Mexico.

In 1853, learning of the California meat shortage, he and Carson rounded up all the woolies they could buy reasonably. When they started their drive northwest from Santa Fe, each man bossed a flock of about six thousand sheep. Neither summer heat, desert fire, roaring rivers, skyscraping mountains, nor hostile Indians stayed them from their destination. In California, they disposed of the mutton on the hoof for $5.50 per head. Their cost in New Mexico had been two bits. After paying off their herders, Maxwell and Carson split a profit of approximately sixty thousand dollars!

THREE YEARS LATER, on September 25, 1857, the legality of the Miranda-Beaubien land grant was finally confirmed by the surveyor-general of New Mexico (appointed by the U. S. Congress in 1854). "Good and valid," ruled the surveyor-general, "according to the laws and customs of the Republic of Mexico, the decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States, and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo."

That same year, Maxwell decided to move his home and headquarters to an even more propitious location, on the Cimarron River. He missed Carson, who had been appointed U. S. agent for the Ute Indians and spent most of his time at the agency office in Taos.

While the new *rancho* developed on the Cimarron, another alluring opportunity fell into Maxwell's lap. Guadalupe Miranda, now commissioner-general of Mexico, wrote his partner Carlos Beaubien offering to sell him his share of the grant. Carlos passed the proposal to his son-in-law. Through Miranda's son Pablo, Maxwell negotiated to purchase half of the ambiguous whole. On April 7, 1858, Maxwell handed over $2,745 for half of the presumed 22 square leagues (97,658 acres). It was like buying the entire San Francisco Bay area.

By the early 1860s, Maxwell was managing his various enterprises from the Maxwell Rancho colony, which he renamed "Cimarron" and had appointed himself probate judge. The family resided in a baronial re-creation of the Rayado mansion. Here it elicited sobriquets such as The Castle, Manor House, and The Villa. The townsite of Cimarron also sat on the Santa Fe Trail and catered to the caravans of Conestogas, Pittsburghs, prairie schooners, and freighters, miles long and from four to fifteen wagons wide. One firm worked 3,500 wagons, 4,500 men, 40,000 oxen, and 1,000 mules.

Then in 1864, Maxwell was appointed an Indian agent, and hired German and Italian stonemasons to erect the Aztec Grist Mill near his Manor House. The diverted Cimarron River

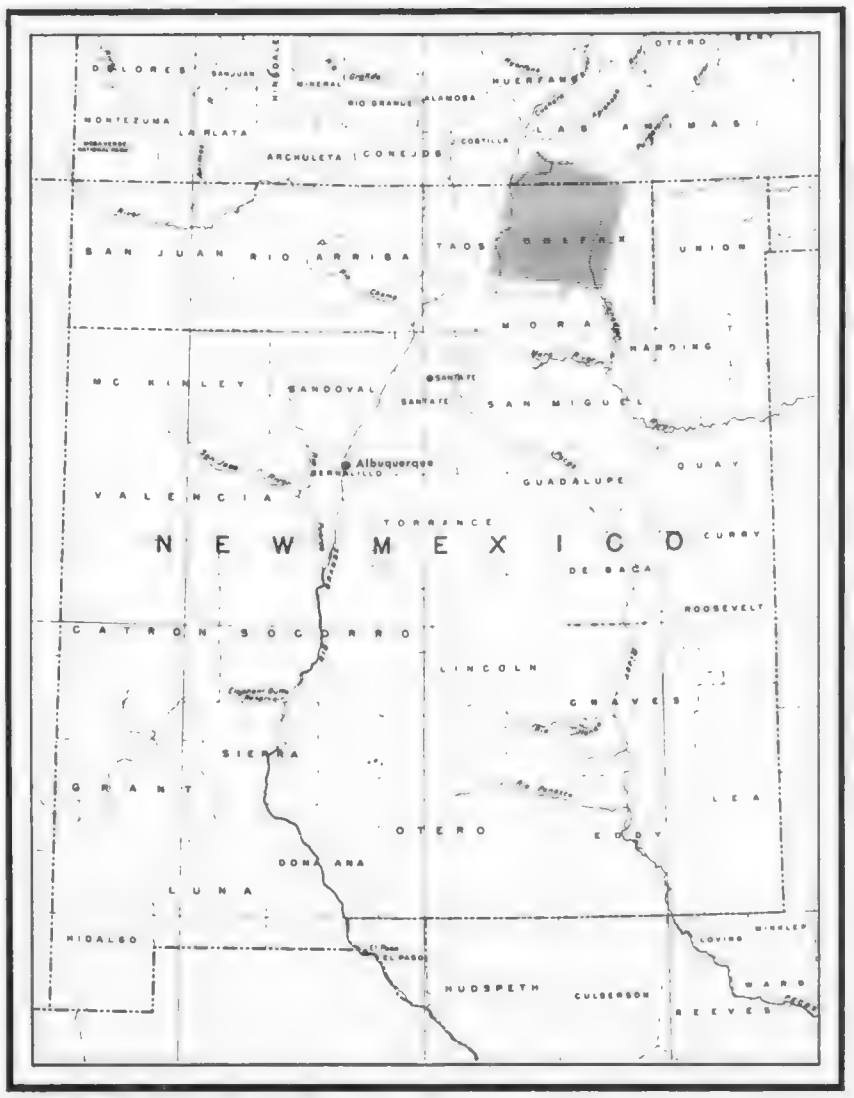
Luz Beaubien Maxwell, wife of Lucien Bonaparte.

provided power to grind corn and wheat grown on the Maxwell ranch, and Ute and Jicarilla Apache Indians surrounded the mill weekly for their government flour rations.

But a pall fell over the Maxwell family's fortunes that year, when Carlos Beaubien died. Maxwell, however, shared with the six Beaubien children in division of his father-in-law's half of the original land grant. Subsequently, he pursued the opportunity to buy out all the heirs and other tract owners on the original grant. He had been tipped off by his friend Colonel Carson that influential officials were advising the federal gov-

ernment to purchase the entire grant for $250,000. It would be turned into a reservation for the more than thirty thousand "wild Indians" who for years had impeded colonization by plundering and killing settlers. Approximately $50,000 later, Maxwell possessed every known acre of the grant. From then on, the vast estate was known as the Maxwell Grant. And Maxwell's it remained, for the U. S. government ignored the purchase recommendations.

"Gold!"
"Gold on Baldy!"
"Gold in Willow Gulch!"
"Gold in Moreno Valley!"
The magic shouts echoed high and low through Maxwell's realm and beyond in 1867. Like the fifing of a Pied Piper, the words lured packs of gold-hounds to Maxwell's property. Hitherto nameless wrinkles and seams of Baldy Peak's topography suddenly found themselves designated Grouse Gulch, Michigan, Santa Fe, Mexican, Last Chance, Crazy Indian, Pioneer, as soldiers from Fort Union, Arizona prospectors, and Colorado miners combed the area for gold.



The shaded area represents the Maxwell Land Grant of the 1865–70 period. Part of the grant ended up in Colorado when an Act of Congress straightened out the boundary between the two states in 1861.

Maxwell built the Aztec Grist Mill in 1864, providing the Ute and Apache Indians with government-rationed flour.

Maxwell's personal gold mine was the payments to him, including half-shares of lodes, for the scores of claims being registered. Many miners, contending that "the man who holds the biggest gun holds the claim," disputed Maxwell's landlordship and refused to pay even a flake in rent. Maxwell swallowed his losses, for he refused to resort to force.

But he made money nonetheless—even beating the miners at their own game. He participated in organizing the Copper Mining Company to exploit the mineral responsible for the gold strike on Baldy. However, while tunneling for "the green," the Maxwell-blessed picks of the miners struck "the yellow" of a vein as wide as a barn door. It was the first lode in the Moreno field.

Then in 1868 the Aztec was born—the richest gold-quartz mine in the territory. Imagine encountering visible gold in a raw mine! Imagine spider-webs of pure gold, and threads and golden taffy pulls between gold-bearing rocks. Imagine a specimen gold yield of better than $19,000 per ton—plus a silver content of nearly $200. Of course Maxwell, the Midas

Continued on page 62

Some observations on the historiography of the frontier's most popular—but controversial—hero

THE WEST'S GUNMEN: I

BY GARY L. ROBERTS

BEFORE FENCES, embargoes against Texas cattle, and prohibition tamed the Kansas cattle towns, those "beautiful, bibulous Babylons of the frontier" spawned much of the folklore of the American West and contributed more than any other phase of western development to America's undying melodrama, the morality play that Frank Waters has termed the "Great American Myth." The myth (if that word is appropriate) provided the United States with some of its most persistent folk figures. Wyatt Earp, Bat Masterson, Wild Bill Hickok, and a saloon full of cowtown worthies, remembered today by the inadequate term "gunfighter," have achieved undying fame as the tamers of the most violent of American frontiers.

The gunfighters were not unique to the Kansas cowtowns. They swaggered up the streets of Arizona and Colorado mining camps. They nudged cow ponies across Texas, New Mexico, and Wyoming. They dealt faro and monte in Idaho and Montana. They sold their talents to California politicians. But it was in the dusty streets of Abilene and Wichita and Dodge City that they fired the imagination and inspired the mass media of three generations. Over the years, the historical characters that gave the legend birth were lost in a wasteland of melodramatic fiction, sensationalism, grade-B movies, and —unfortunately—a large number of books and articles purporting to be history.

The longevity of the gunfighter as a folk figure has prompted periodic examination of the phenomenon by folklorists, literary critics, historians (both professional and amateur), even psychologists. Penetrating analyses of legend-making and the psychosocial meaning of American interest in the "western" have vied with indiscriminate hero-worship and unabashed debunking. Doubtless, no field of historical endeavor has needed reevaluation and revision as badly as this one. The verdict of Ramon F. Adams, bibliographer and historian of the gunman's West, that "the written history of our western gunmen is a travesty" is certainly just.

Yet the reaction of most professional historians to the subject has been to sweep it under the historical rug, to ignore or deride it as unworthy of serious study. The gunfighter is the property of the popularizer, surrendered by historians, as Kent L. Steckmesser puts it, because they refuse "to pay much attention to such presumably adolescent subjects." Writing in this area is romantic, localistic, uncritical, nostalgic, eulogistic, and sensational. Even revisionist writing (or more properly debunking) has involved more rhetoric and emotion than historical interpretation and synthesis. Indeed, the historiography of the gunfighter is notable only in its monumental size.

THE FAILURE of historical investigation concerning the western gunman has its roots deep in the past and in the character of the American people. Americans have always taken great pride in the uniqueness of the Western frontier. The interest of Americans in guns, their belief in self-

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EDITOR'S NOTE—The western "gunfighter" is more the property of melodrama than of history, but in an era when attention has been drawn so dramatically to the theme of violence in the American past, his peculiar and negative role in the western experience deserves something better than the exploitation of popularizers and the disdain of scholars. If he is to have any historical validity, the gunfighter and his role must be identified more clearly.

The present article examines the gunfighter in history. The legend-makers, from the blood-and-thunder writers of the late nineteenth century to the romantic biographers of the twentieth century, are the subject of this first installment. The second part of the article, to appear in the March issue of THE AMERICAN WEST, *explores more recent writings and suggests reasons for the failure of historical inquiry and investigation in this area.*

reliance, personal freedom and free enterprise, their position in world affairs, their attitudes toward underdeveloped nations, the violence of the mid-twentieth century, and even the basic nature of American democracy have been attributed to the frontier experience. This mystique has helped to make the characters of expansion larger than life.

And, in the popular mind, the West is symbolized by the gunfighter. The shaping of public attitudes toward the westerner as one who "lived with one foot on a brass rail and one hand on a still smoking gun" probably began with Colonel George Ward Nichols' fanciful article "Wild Bill," which appeared in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* in 1867. Wild Bill Hickok provided the prototypal hero of the gunfighter legend. His alleged remark to Henry M. Stanley that same year—"No, by heaven! I never killed one man without good cause!"—provided the code. And when, in Nichols' account, Hickok faced Dave Tutt across the sunbaked plaza at Springfield, Missouri, and killed him in fair and solitary combat, the basic ingredient of the myth, the gunfight, was established, to be immortalized by Owen Wister in *The Virginian,* more than three decades later.

It is not surprising that Wild Bill Hickok, Jesse James, and Billy the Kid were favorite subjects of the dime novelists of the 1870s and 1880s. They were the lineal descendants of Natty Bumppo, Daniel Boone, Davy Crockett, and Simon Girty. Nor did it matter to the reading public that the volumes of Ned Buntline, Prentice Ingraham, J. W. Buel, and their ilk bore little resemblance to reality. That the characters were "real, live heroes" was incidental. These production-line paperbacks taught morals and praised the values of American society. Implicit in them was a philosophy, a code of morality which overpowered any necessity for truth.

Yet these tomes were read widely, even in the West, and in later times would play mysterious tricks in the minds of old-timers. Exploits of a Hickok related by a Buel, for example, became an event in the "memory" of a down-and-out old-timer trying to make his recollections sound good for an eager young writer of another, younger generation.

Burton Rascoe pointed out thirty years ago the impact of the *National Police Gazette* in this same regard. This moralistic pink-paged creator of sentiment and conduct was read in bordello and bayou, in crowded frontier saloon and remote mountain cabin. Rascoe cites Billy the Kid as a classic example of the influence which the *Gazette* had upon the writing of history. Every old-timer, he writes, would declare that he knew "the kid," then go on to relate numerous tales of his prowess to which he was "eyewitness." The source of these stories was most often the *Police Gazette,* their descriptions paralleling the magazine so closely as to make the connection unmistakable. Stories of this genre gave rise to many of the falsehoods and distortions which even today plague the person who enters the domain of Western folklore and history.

Moreover, magazines like *Munsey's, Everybody's, Scribner's, Metropolitan, Saturday Evening Post,* and *Human Life* spotlighted western stories. Even when the stories purported to be factual most writers were totally absorbed in a romantic image, the nostalgic recollection of an era which was rapidly vanishing. Whether "participants" in the fading epoch or pedestrian journalists, they "were accustomed to rearranging facts for purposes of narrative interest." They were not so insensitive as the dime novels and penny dreadfuls, but they were less concerned with "truth" than with a good story.

IT SHOULD BE NOTED that the early fictioneers, including such notables as Owen Wister and Alfred Henry Lewis, saw value in tagging their heroes with real names. Hence, Lewis's fanciful tales of Bat Masterson and Wild Bill Hickok were sometimes regarded as true and repeated as fact. For this reason, it should be a matter of some importance to trace questionable stories to their sources so that evaluation can be made. However, this is an area little exploited by historians and writers in the field.

Frequently, in more recent literature, offhand reference is made to "blood-and-thunder fiction writers," "dime novelists," "pulp writers," and "tales from the late 1890s and early 1900s"; but the most notable fact about such references is

XUM

the lack of specific citation. No systematic examination of the popular magazines of this era has been made. The reasons are easy enough to understand: the files of such magazines are not readily accessible. Many of the articles appeared in magazines which were not indexed in the guides to periodical literature. And, perhaps most importantly, the rewards for diligent search are frequently small, made more so by the awareness that most of the articles will be unreliable. Despite the tedious nature of the task, it is a chore which needs to be undertaken if the origins of many of the errors are to be understood and the problem of the myth put into the proper perspective.

Many of the same problems are also inherent in the literature of the 1920s and 1930s, the era of the pulps and the heyday of the adventure and western magazines. The twenties saw the western novel come into its own, producing some of the most prolific of western novelists. The redoubtable real life characters were not neglected, as a survey of such literature will demonstrate. Much—perhaps most—of what was produced was of no value as fiction or history, but these tales, fanciful or authentic, passed into the growing library of the gunfighter.

These years also saw the rise of the "legend-makers." Within the decades of the twenties and thirties, the legends of Wild Bill Hickok, Billy the Kid, and Wyatt Earp were either reinforced or created by books with some claim to accuracy. Two men of ability turned their attention to the deeply entrenched legend of Wild Bill Hickok. Frank J. Wilstach's *Wild Bill Hickok: Prince of Pistoleers* appeared in 1926, and William E. Connelley's *Wild Bill and His Era* was published seven years later. Both men obviously tried to come to grips with the Hickok story, and for a time they were the most reliable sources. But in the end both books gave respectability to the legendary Wild Bill.

The mustachioed character at the top left is Wild Bill Hickok. This 1867 photo was taken after the campaign against the southern plains Indians.

Walter Noble Burns, a serious-minded but romantic journalist, in his *The Saga of Billy the Kid,* published in 1926, rescued "a great southwestern legend that was in danger of being lost." He visited New Mexico, amassed a large collection of folk tales, and produced a volume that is a monument to the vitality of folklore. His romanticism is equally apparent

The two armed men standing with Ed Finnerty are Tom (at left) and Frank McLaury, both killed in the Tombstone fight with the Earp brothers.

in *Tombstone: An Iliad of the Southwest* which followed the next year. In the same florid style he recounted the Tombstone career of Wyatt Earp. But it remained for Stuart N. Lake to lift Earp to a place of preeminence among western lawmen in perhaps the most controversial book of all in Western history, *Wyatt Earp: Frontier Marshal.*

The infamous three: Wild Bill Hickok, Texas Jack, and Buffalo Bill.

A Charles M. Russell pen and ink drawing depicting Hickok and the McCanles affair.

THESE AUTHORS became the standard biographers of their subjects. They made six-shooter heroes respectable, and their works were hailed as substantial contributions to the history of the Western frontier. It is on their shoulders that most of the damnation of recent years has fallen. It is they who have been most severely criticized for creating the Myth and for perpetuating false images of the individuals about whom they wrote. That criticism is deserved, most would agree. Much that they wrote has been disproved or called into serious question. To catalogue the numerous charges against them or to list their errors would be a useless exercise, they have been aired so often.

Yet, it should be remembered that Lake and Burns and Connelley were "revisionists of a sort, setting the record straight," as they believed. "No man in Tombstone's history has been more bitterly maligned than Wyatt Earp," wrote Burns in indignant defense. "No charge was too black to be made against him, no slander too atrocious to be believed."

William B. "Bat" Masterson and Luke Short (facing page) hardly look the part of gunfighters in their sartorial elegance. Their paths crossed many times.

Connelley's whole book was in some ways a rebuttal. In 1927, an article in the *Nebraska History Magazine* described Hickok as a "cold-blooded killer without heart or conscience," for his role in the famous incident with McCanles at Rock Creek Station. An outraged Connelley responded with an article of his own, declaring that "it was necessary to make a plain, emphatic statement of this historic event because of these misrepresentations." The biography which followed was an attempt to make his claim stick.

Moreover, the legend-makers had access to sources, living and documentary, which are no longer available to researchers. Their research was more extensive than that of any previous group of writers. They traveled widely, searched newspaper files previously unused, interviewed hundreds of old-timers, explored untouched court records, opened the private correspondence of men who had known Earp and Hickok and the Kid. Stuart N. Lake was the first of a very few researchers to see the handwritten transcript of the Wells Spicer hearing of the O. K. Corral fight. He also examined Dodge City records, no longer extant. The indefatigable Connelley uncovered much valuable material, including original Hickok letters.

Given the obvious inferiority of previous writing in the field, these much-damned biographers had few reliable written accounts to draw on. It was Lake and Connelley who first established a reasonably accurate chronology of cow-town history, despite their errors, and most of their background material is still used with little alteration by their detractors. Evidence of their ability as researchers is abundant, but their success as historians was limited by serious problems.

Wilstach, who was not "wholly uncritical," demonstrated a marked partiality for Hickok, and Connelley was the victim of uncontrolled subjectivity which flavored all his writing. Steckmesser suggests that Connelley was "so dazzled by his vision of an epic gunfighter that he could not face up to some of his hero's faults." He is something of a tragic figure, a man with limitless energy, but incapable of writing without bias. Joseph G. Rosa, the leading authority on Hickok, agrees that if Connelley had not been so "bogged down by his own prejudices . . . he would have emerged as a brilliant researcher."

There were other problems for Connelley as well. He shortened his biography "from 600 pages to something like 450 pages" to meet publishing requirements, then died three years before his book was published. His daughter, Edith Connelley Clift, and his publisher, Rufus Rockwell Wilson, deleted more material and "condensed" the rest. A comparison of the original manuscript with the published book reveals many changes and distortions even in quoted material—including Hickok's letters—that materially damaged the book.

STUART N. LAKE initially had the assistance of Wyatt Earp himself and the benefit of a manuscript autobiography prepared from dictated notes by his friend, John Flood. Earp was sensitive about the project and his wife, Josephine Sarah Marcus Earp, flatly opposed it. Earp was extremely jealous of his reputation and rather bitter about some published accounts of his exploits, but he was noticeably reticent in supplying information on certain points. It was Mrs. Earp, however, who proved to be the greatest problem.

Her influence and interference with the project, apparently growing out of fear for her husband's reputation, is evident throughout the Lake correspondence. Wyatt restrained her, assuring Lake that he could "take care of Sadie." Then, on January 13, 1929, Earp died. His death was a blow to Lake, and thereafter Mrs. Earp's demands and objections became almost unbearable. She examined the book at every stage of its development, and when the galleys were ready, she insisted on seeing them, then refused to return them, much to the consternation of Lake and the publishers. Her reasons are not very clear beyond the point that she was not satisfied with the book. Lake made Wyatt Earp a symbol of all the heroic qualities of the American frontier, a symbol beautifully executed in a literary style "worthy of Ernest Hemingway."

In this 1879 photograph of J. F. "White-Eye Jack" Anderson and "Yankee" Judd, Anderson holds the Peacemaker given to him by Wild Bill. Note Anderson's left eyebrow.

It was an accomplishment that should have made Mrs. Earp very proud. It did not.

Although she made no further objections and even took some pride in the success of the book, Mrs. Earp remained dissatisfied and tried vainly in later years to have her own account of life with Wyatt Earp written up and published. What effect did the circumstances surrounding the book and the pressures she brought to bear have on the published results of Lake's work? How different would the book have been if Earp had lived to see publication and restrained Sadie in her zeal?

Walter Noble Burns, the most hopelessly romantic of the legend-makers, seems to have understood his limitations as a historian. Perhaps that is why he couched *The Saga of Billy the Kid* in folkloric terms so deliberately and openly. Even his title so implies, and his constant reference to the "genial immortality" of folk tales about the Kid should be enough to warn even the most unwary reader that this work is not scholarly history. Nevertheless, his apologia for Billy the Kid became the standard interpretation.

That these works were accepted is a reflection both of the ability of the legend-makers and of the essential poverty in

Luke Short, gunfighter and buddy of Bat Masterson.

previous writing about the gunfighter. A kind of Gresham's law took control. Serious history on the gunfighter was so scarce that books which had any legitimate claim to accuracy were hoarded, their errors minimized or ignored. At least the heroes of Lake and Connelley were believable.

Of course, these considerations do not absolve Burns, Lake, and Connelley from the responsibility to be accurate. And in any analysis based upon what is known of their heroes, the exaggerations, the eulogizations, are all too apparent. But, in an era when research methods were less sophisticated, when some subjects had never received full treatment, and when others were so enmeshed in dime novelry, their errors deserve perspective.

These authors made mistakes which have precipitated many stories which are now almost impossible to eradicate and were perhaps naïve, caught in the web of a growing myth themselves. They wrote in an area that had not known scholarship and produced volumes that demanded attention by their

Continued on page 64

XUM

COLLECTOR'S CHOICE

THE LEGENDARY CONCORDS

BY S. BLACKWELL DUNCAN

Lewis Downing

LEWIS DOWNING DID NOT KNOW, as he trudged through the soft May greenery toward Concord, New Hampshire, that in that modest town he was destined to make a significant contribution to American transportation and the opening of the West.

All that concerned him, besides his tired feet, was that he no longer cared to take orders from his elder brother in the family carriage trade back in Lexington, Massachusetts. Throughout his later life he often repeated that "honesty, industry, perseverance, and economy will insure any person with ordinary health a good living and something for a rainy day." He was setting out to prove this as yet unvoiced theorem.

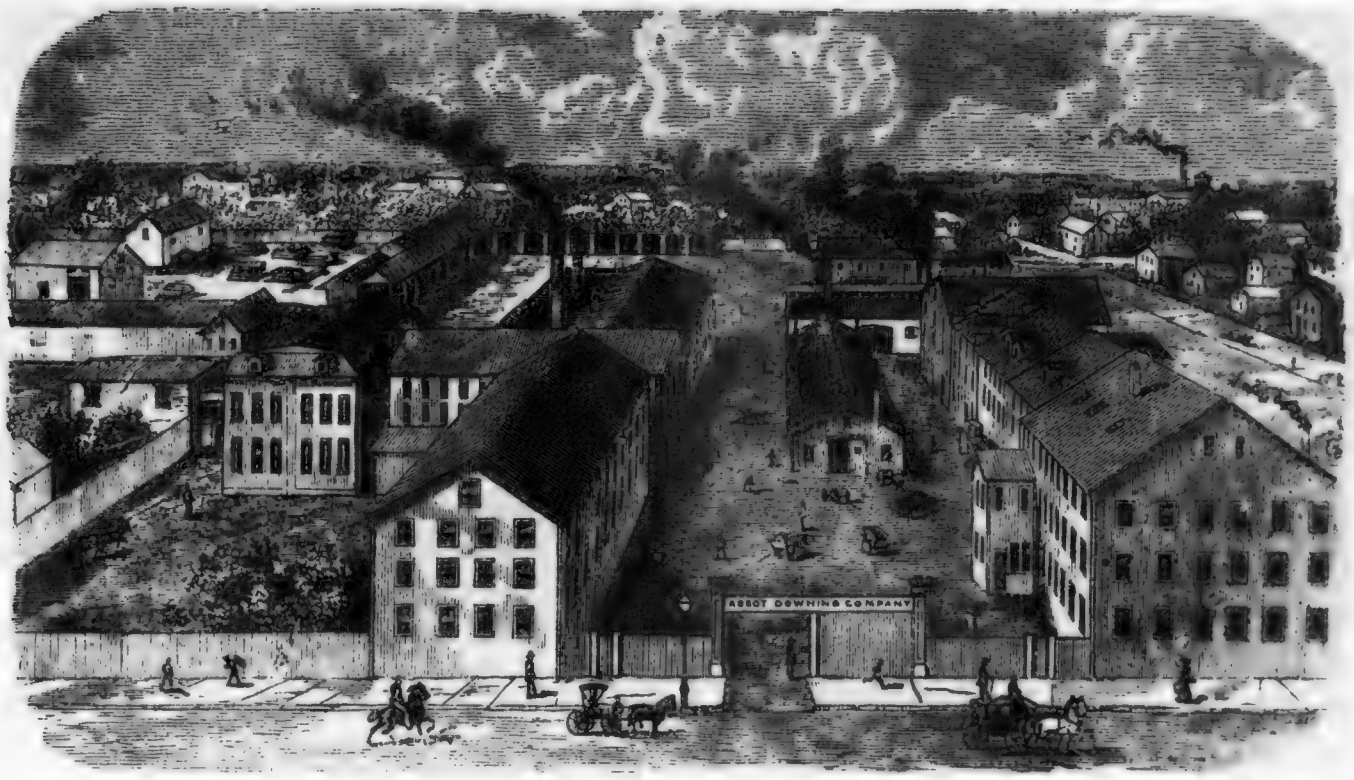
With sixty carefully saved dollars and a few tools, young Lewis opened up shop as a wheelwright. Soon he turned his hand to buggies and wagons, selling his first rig to a relative, Benjamin Kimball, Jr., on November 8, 1813, for sixty dollars. After this sale came many others, and Lewis Downing's success in Concord was assured.

By 1816 his little business had prospered to such an extent that he had to start building a factory, which continued to grow under his strict and expert control.

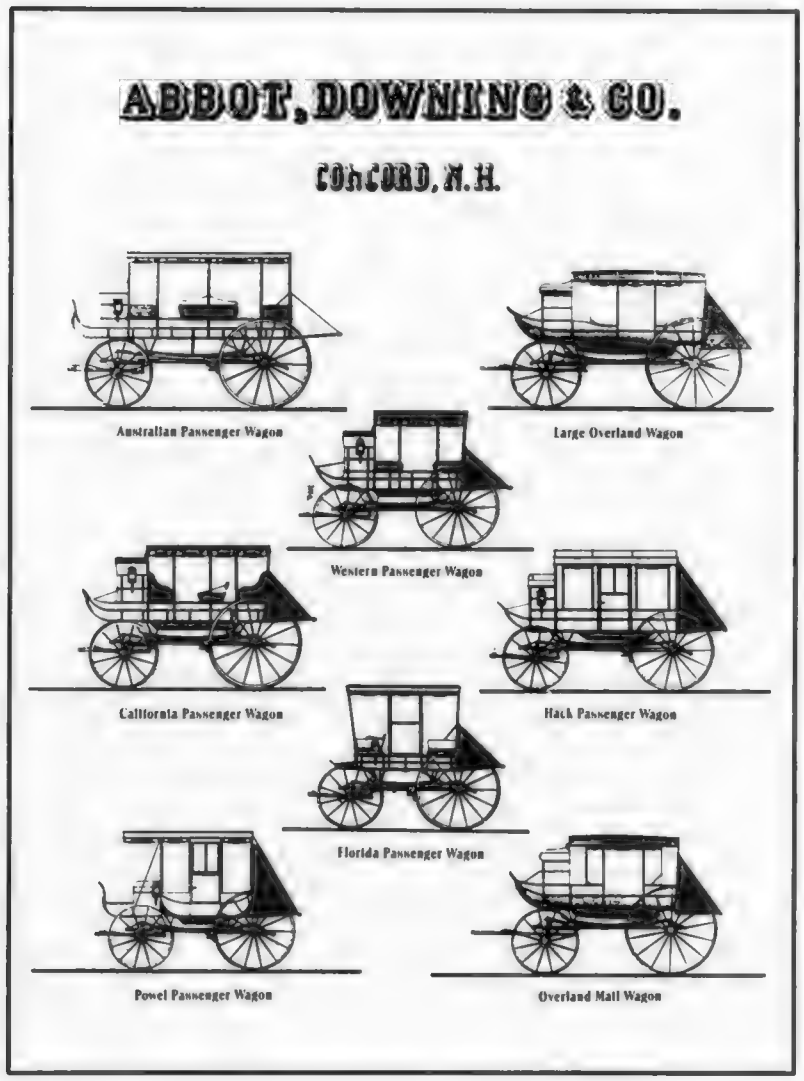
In 1826 he took into the company J. Stephen Abbott, a journeyman coach-body builder later to become a partner, and they put their heads together on a new project. The resulting vehicle, the fabled Concord coach, revolutionized the coaching world. John Shepard, an innkeeper in Salisbury, New Hampshire, was the owner of the first Concord, followed over the years by more than three thousand others.

Concords were not made like any other coach, and there was no other that could compare. They were lighter, stronger, faster, more durable and far more comfortable, for both driver and passengers. While other coaches were "cranky," slow, and hard on horses, the Concord could be handily pulled by a team of four and made fine time with six. At the Glen House, away up in Pinkham Notch, New Hampshire, one driver with a flair for showmanship was widely known for driving his

Concord Coach #23, built in 1852 for the Highland & Alpine Houses, was used to transport hotel guests.



An early drawing of the Abbot-Downing works in Concord, New Hampshire, as the company approached its zenith.



Reproduction of an Abbot-Downing advertising circular of 1870, showing eight of the vehicles.

Concord and eight matched whites like the wind, managing them with such finesse that he would whirl into the Grand Trunk Station at exactly the same time as the train.

There never was a bad Concord product, whether coach, mud wagon, or barge. No matter how menial its job was to be, each vehicle was made to the most exacting standards known to the trade. Throughout the first years of the company, Lewis Downing acted as his own quality-control department; later others carried on his rigid requirements, always in the old tradition and with his precepts in mind.

Mr. Downing was meticulous to extremes, a master craftsman and mechanic, and in his own way an artist. Mediocre work was anathema to him, and he would have no inferior materials in his shop. He hired only the best men, some of them imported from England, Scotland and Canada. From these men he demanded the same perfection that he did of himself. On countless occasions he destroyed a part that did not meet his standards, so that it could not be used again or remade. The reputation of the Concord coach grew and grew, until it became a household synonym for perfection.

WORK IN THE FACTORY was long and hard, even in the later part of the century. The day averaged twelve to fourteen hours, except on Saturday when six o'clock was quitting time. Sunday, of course, was a day of rest. A good share of the work was carried on by the light of flickering oil lamps in that damp and chilly atmosphere so well known to New Englanders. Nearly everything was done by hand until late in the company's history, and Downing's con-

Continued on page 61

XU

Water, Man, and Nature

A PORTRAIT OF THE WEB OF LIFE

FROM THE TIME *that Hezekiah, as the Bible reports, "made a pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city," man has looked upon water as a commodity meant to satisfy the immediate needs of survival and progress. In no other region has this traditional attitude been reflected more dramatically than in the American West, which Wallace Stegner has characterized as "a series of deserts and semi-deserts separated by the snow fountains of high ranges, and with a rain fountain along its Pacific shore." In such an environment, the importance of water has assumed outsized dimensions; its use and misuse through the years has built cities, reclaimed deserts, created agricultural empires—and in the process has crippled rivers, lakes, perhaps even the ocean.*

Finally, after too many years, we begin to realize that water has an importance to us far beyond its convenience as a generator of electricity, as a means of disposing of our wastes, or even as an ingredient necessary to economic growth: it is a profoundly vital strand in the complicated web of existence, and to tamper with it unwisely is to threaten the desperate fragility of life—all life. That theme is the core of Living Water, *a forthcoming American West book. With text by David Cavagnaro and photographs by Ernest Braun,* Living Water *illuminates the delicate balances between water, air, earth, and energy that must be maintained if the processes of life and death are to continue on this earth. The following article has been adapted from the book, which will be issued by American West Publishing Company in April of this year.*

The early morning sun begins to melt the frost on a spider web.

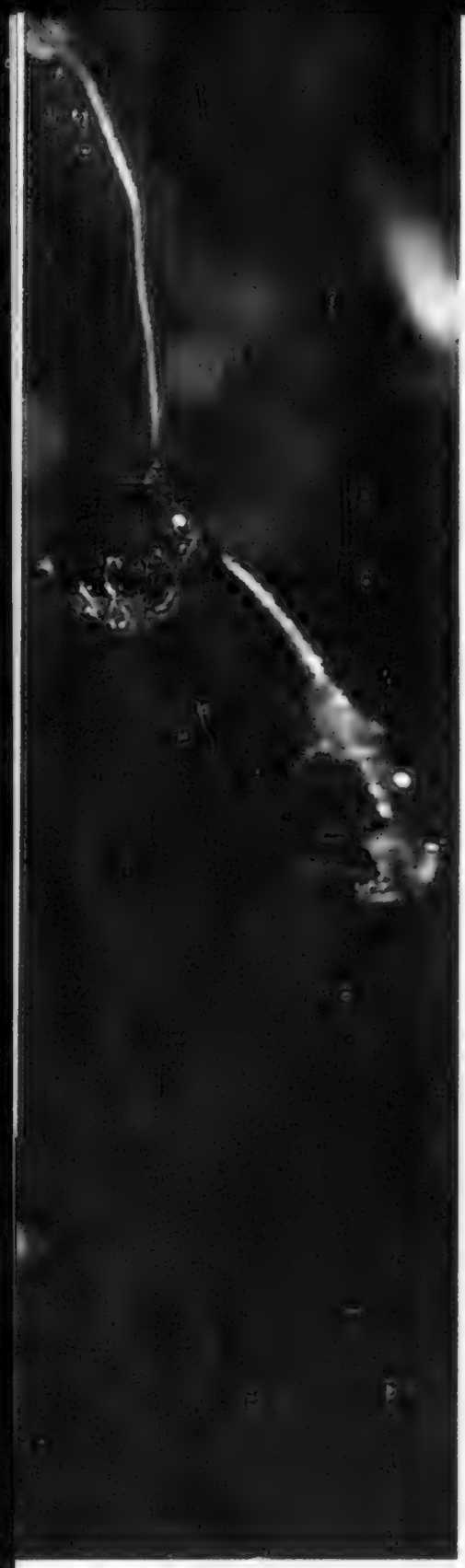
The water plunges down and over every rocky obstacle. (Merriam Lake, Fresno County, California)

Text by DAVID CAVAGNARO
Photographs by ERNEST BRAUN

EDITOR'S NOTE—Ernest Braun, noted professional photographer, and David Cavagnaro, a skilled amateur photographer as well as writer, each won first prize in Landscape Photography in their respective divisions in Life *magazine's worldwide contest last month.*

XUM

Each drop contains an image of the entire local world.



THE RIVER OF LIFE

ONE MORNING I sat in the damp grass of a mountain meadow, my back to the forest, and watched the coming of the sun. The meadow was silver with dew. From the tip of every grass blade hung an especially large drop of water, full and round. When I held my pocket lens toward them, I saw that each contained an image of the entire local world—the meadow, the forest, the sky, and the sun itself glinting through the trees.

The water seemed to be saying in these tiny crystal balls that it is, in its own way, all-knowing, for at one time or another this same water has been involved in some part of every process that has occurred since the first great rains began falling and the earth was slowly cooled.

It is the river of life with its source in the barren peaks and lifeless seas of the past, with its source again among the timberline crags of every mountain range that has risen since. Water is the spring that nourishes the alpine garden, the stream that supplies forest and meadow, the river that feeds farm and city, and replenishes the sea.

It is the river that flows small through the walls of every cell, through the veins of leaf and limb, because the water hanging from the tips of every grass blade that morning had come there just so. In the cool of the night, when transpiration was slowed and the air was moist, the roots continued drawing water into pipes and vessels which fed the leaves. More was taken up than the plants could use, and the excess escaped from special pores at the leaf tips.

But in those drops, all of water's larger and smaller journeys were somehow contained, as the image of the meadow was also held for a brief instant in time. Water and life are two threads woven intrinsically together. They are responsible, in their peculiar relationship, for everything we are and all that we do, every one of us.

XUM

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WATER AND GREEN LIGHT

THROUGH ALL green things the water of life flows on and on, filling the tiny retorts so that the chemical reactions can occur, bringing nutrients to the leaves, splitting at the insistence of chlorophyll, providing the foundation for the molecules of all living tissues, carrying the sweet foods of photosynthesis through the veins of plants and animals alike, evaporating from pores to keep leaf and skin cool, transporting wastes, permeating cell walls, diffusing, nourishing.

There is something in the character of man which strives to bridge the chasms of nature. The same desire that urges the spanning of a river also drives man's curiosity about a plant's special use of sunlight. Even now scientists around the world are playing in test tubes with the magic stuff called chlorophyll. Lacking the refined tools of the chemist or the cellular biologist, I have pondered this incredible fact in my own way. I stretched out one warm summer day among the leaves and flowers of my mountain meadow, face to the sky, and tried to approach the world as a grass might. I let the green light flow and the warm rays penetrate.

I fancied that I had roots soaking up moisture from deep in the soil. I imagined that I could feel the water rising through a million veins, feeding the leaf cells where the green stuff, chlorophyll, is kept, that my skin responded, as the laboratories of photosynthesis must, to the penetration of sunrays.

But it was only a fantasy. My experiment had failed, at least in part. I walked away from the meadow as only an animal can. I had no roots here, only a wet back from lying upon a boggy seep.

Water moves inexorably down . . . and down.
(San Joaquin River; facing page: Merced River canyon, California)

A SYSTEM THAT BEGINS WITH PLANTS

Sulphur butterfly.

ALL THE GREAT food webs of land and sea have arisen within a system that begins with plants — all the herbivores and the carnivores that feed on them, the secondary and tertiary carnivores that feed on these meat eaters in turn, the scavengers and decomposers. These are the animals that keep the balance, returning all the plant substances, step by step, to the source—carbon dioxide to the air, nutrients to the soil or the sea—and returning also the water which keeps the whole system flowing.

From this ancient animal lineage also has come man, and we are, so far, no different from the rest. All the great productions of civilizations both past and present stand as monuments not so much in honor of man as in honor of countless precious kernels of grain. "The human brain," Loren Eiseley has written, "so frail, so perishable, so full of inexhaustible dreams and hungers, burns by the power of the leaf."

Our dreams are endless, and maybe also are the possibilities for their fulfillment. Yet while our industry grinds on and our minds play at the fringes of the impossible, we still eat what the plants produce and breathe the oxygen they give off as waste. Even our eyes feast on the soft green light the plants cannot use. For all its profound philosophy and awesome technology, the human brain, it is true, still burns by the power of the leaf.

All the living things depend upon living things.

XUM

A SPECIAL UNION

I THOUGHT ABOUT water, leaf, air, and sun as I walked away from my mountain meadow one evening. I walked through a green mountain world full of them, all four. Because of their special union, the caterpillar could make a living by the blade of grass, the bird by the seed, the squirrel by the pinenut, the deer by the tender shoot, the bee by the sugared blossom. Snails and slugs could rasp their way through life across the green leaf, bears and foxes could munch in season upon tasty berries, and scores of grass-roots scavengers could feast upon the dying stems and tangled fibers that were missed or left behind.

I thought of something else, too, while crawling into an icy sleeping bag beneath the stars and feeling soon warm from the metabolic fires burning within my own body. I remembered that even this was the work of green leaves in their union with water, air, and sun. My little meadow experiment at bridging the gap between kingdoms had not been a total failure, because as I crossed again to the forest, I had grabbed a handful of wild onions and eaten them. They were spicy and delicious. That night, when cool darkness crept over the mountain slope, my body was warmed by the power of the sun and the leaf.

. . . and moves quietly back to the sea.
(San Joaquin River below Modesto, California)

XUM

By T. H. WATKINS

The Curtain Comes Down on a Western Institution

The remnant of a world that never was . . .

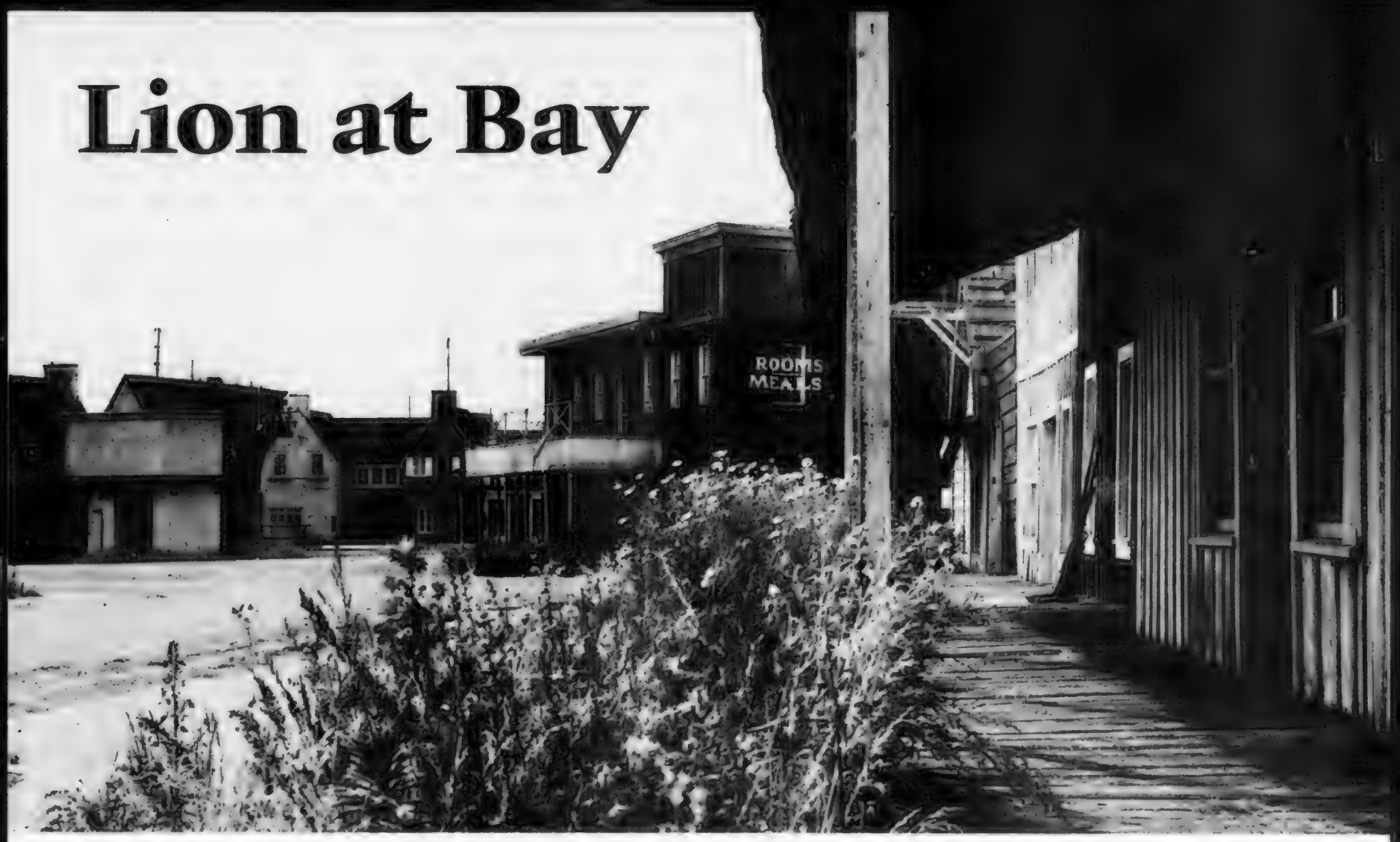
A HEAT-LADEN WIND stirred up a miniature dust devil and dribbled it down the rutted dirt street, which stretched a hundred empty yards, bounded at one end by a jailhouse and at the other by a general store. Lining the street were other false-fronted buildings: a saloon, a sheriff's office, a telegraph office, a stage-line office, a blacksmith shop, a livery stable, a bank, and a hotel. Along one side were parked aging freight wagons, buckboards, and buggies, and at one end sat a formerly splendid stagecoach, whose interior upholstery hung in limp shards from the roof. Everywhere, time had left the marks of its disease: gaping holes in windows, wood stripped of paint, wild clumps of grass thrusting up through the board sidewalks, signboards peeled to illegibility, foundations warped and dangerous.

It was the remnant of a western cow town, ridden with ghosts and memories, the apparent archetype of similar relics scattered from the Kansas prairie to the Texas Panhandle—and yet it had existed nowhere on the face of the earth. For this utterly convincing ghost town was a Hollywood fabrication, an ersatz world that had been the scene of God only knows how many fraudulent walkdowns, bushwhackings, bank holdups, shoot-outs, lynchings, and saloon fistfights. And now, like the towns on which it had been patterned, desuetude had left it moribund and crumbling—the relic imitation of some real relics.

Its location was Lot No. 3 of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's Culver City Studio, and it was decidedly not alone. Behind one side of its street was a curving drive flanked by maple trees and enormous Victorian mansions, a depiction of St. Louis as it had looked in 1900. Behind the other side was a German military barracks, *circa* 1914, complete with cannon, headquarters building, barracks, and officers' canteen. Next in line was a medieval European village of unspecified national origin. A concrete pond, presumably meant to establish the place as a waterfront town, was empty now of all but a few pools of oily rainwater; half of an enormous, baroque-looking ship was "docked" at one end of the canal, the ribs of its fake hull showing through the starboard side in a curiously shameful nakedness, and an imitation clock in an imitation clock tower was stopped forever at 3:37. Farther along, a group of coverless prairie schooners, their iron hoops eaten by rust, sat in a circle beneath a great pile of imitation rocks, waiting for an Indian attack that would never come.

All of these half-worlds were touched by the same neglect, but the cow town seemed the one that most effectively illustrated the sorry state to which Hollywood moviemaking had

Lion at Bay



. . . this fabrication of a western cowtown sits on MGM's Lot 3 surrounded by relics of other times and places that never were.

fallen. For two generations, the studio-dominated movie industry, one of the modern West's largest and most influential enterprises, had fed on the paraphernalia of the West-that-was or -might-have-been to produce the bread-and-butter films called Westerns; it had fattened on myth, and now, like the mythical cow town it had built to simulate the past, the studio system itself was disintegrating.

The most immediate evidence of that disintegration could be seen at MGM's Lot 1 a mile away, where the first of hundreds of thousands of items—automobiles, boats, costumes, furniture, *et al*—from more than two thousand movies were being auctioned off to an avid general public as the first step in a retrenchment program. It was here that the symbolism of the moment was most apparent—and, for Hollywood, what could be more appropriate than symbolism? The muted rumble of traffic from Overland Avenue played a dull counterpoint to the silence of this deserted western street, and overhead a jet clamored noisily on its approach to Los Angeles International Airport; yet if you squinted your eyes just right and looked down the street, you could imagine John Wayne coming toward you with that inimitable, panther-like stride of his, or Gary Cooper with his awkward lope, or Wild Bill Elliott, or even Hoot Gibson or Johnny Mack Brown. . . .

THE HISTORY of early Hollywood is comical," H. Allen Smith once remarked, "as is all history." One could argue the latter point, if one felt like it, but it would be hard to gainsay the claim that Hollywood's growth had in it the elements of farce. The town was founded in 1887 as a temperance subdivision in the Cahuenga Valley, whose principal industry was the production of watermelons, tomatoes, green peppers, and sundry fruits. The big event of the little town's early life, W. H. Hutchinson has noted in his *California,* "was the arrival of the stage from Los Angeles to Toluca Lake." It was a center of virtue, probity, and sobriety.

Twenty-five years later, Hollywood had become the undisputed center of an industry whose relationship to virtue, probity, and sobriety remains questionable today. It began in 1911, when a group of film-makers rented out the Blondeau Tavern (a peculiarly appropriate site) at Gower and Sunset Boulevards for a studio, and over the next several years the town was invaded by a small army of moviemakers. At first, the pious citizens of the town rejected the intrusion as offensive to public morals and good taste, but by 1915 their attitudes had shifted profoundly, and for a very good reason: money. That was the year of D. W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation,* the industry's first blockbuster; it was also the year

XUM

that its payroll exceeded twenty million dollars. Hollywood embraced the "crazy film-makers" with Calvinistic intensity, and from that point forward so exploited its identification with the industry that by the end of the 1920s "Hollywood" and "movies" were synonymous from Montreal to Marrakech.

The period from 1930 to about 1950 might be characterized best as Hollywood's version of the Gold Rush, with all the qualities typical of that grand catharsis bloated to larger-than-life proportions: it became a raucous, glittering caldron of people on the make, where fortune and failure flip-flopped with staggering rapidity and money flowed from hand to hand in quantities that robbed it of meaning.

Writer Ben Hecht, himself a feeder at the Hollywood trough, described this permanent boomtown in *Charlie,* his biography of playwright and screenwriter Charles MacArthur: "The sun shone. The dinner parties looked like stage sets. International beauties sat in candle-lit cafe nooks, holding hands with undersized magnates. Novelists, poets, and playwrights staggered bibulously in and out of swimming pools. Floperoo actors and actresses from New York, ex-waitresses, elevator girls, light o' loves, high school graduates with the right-sized boobies, all met their Good Fairy and were given seats on the royal bandwagon. And out of the hotel suites, brothels, and casinos came a noise of life undaunted such as had not been heard since the Forty-Niners drank themselves to death looking for nuggets."

Unlike the original gold rush, however, Hollywood's updated version was from its beginning a rigidly structured, almost provincial affair, ruled by a handful of fiefdoms called studios—principally Paramount, 20th Century–Fox, MGM, Warner Brothers, and RKO. With the convolutions of corporate interlock some might call monopoly (and some did), the numerous independent companies characteristic of the early years were shaken down by the 1930s into a few dominant entities which controlled their slices of the celluloid pie absolutely, from production on a sound stage to exhibition in the local theater in Dismal Seepage, Ohio, or wherever. Like any other one-industry town, Hollywood's politics, mores, social life, and economy were indistinguishable from those of the industry itself; it was a great, gossipy village, some transmogrification of the feudal tradition—and its baronial castles were called "lots," the core machinery of the studio system.

In *Southern California Country,* published in 1946, Carey McWilliams offered a description of these walled dominions: "The main studio lots are walled towns, each with its principal thoroughfares, sidestreets, and alleys. On the lot people work together, live together, eat together. With from two to three thousand employees, each lot is a community in itself. Occupying from thirty to forty acres of land, each lot has its own office buildings; its factories (the stages); its theatres and projection rooms; its laboratories, dressmaking shops, blacksmith shops, machine shops, wardrobes, restaurants, dressing rooms, lumber sheds; greenhouses; scene docks; electrical plant; garages; and planing mills. No one has ever precisely described a motion-picture lot. It is neither a factory nor a business establishment nor yet a company town. Rather it is more in the nature of a community, a beehive, or, as Otis Ferguson said, 'fairy-land on a production line.' "

WITHIN THESE FAIRYLAND factories the studios practiced a mundane version of autocratic rule over their employees, but at salaries that would rival the largesse of a drunken shah. "Hollywood," one highly paid if somewhat cynical writer of the period is said to have remarked, "is probably the only place in the world where you can sell your soul at anywhere near its real value." In 1939, one of the best years of this golden age, the industry paid out more than $130 million to its employees, two-thirds of which went in the form of salaries to the higher-echelon help—studio executives, producers, directors, and writers—and of that two-thirds nearly half went to actresses and actors, platinum cogs in the machine called the star system.

It was a confusing, surrealistic world where money had the fabulous qualities of something out of *Alice in Wonderland,* and talent was a commodity measured in box-office returns. Millions were spent in the choosing, molding, promoting, and pampering of stars. Former truck drivers and cocktail waitresses found themselves yanked from the oblivion of depression and paid hundreds of dollars a week on the strength of no more visible a talent than their appeal to the libidos of the audience; eminent novelists, playwrights, and journalists—among them Idwal Jones, William Faulkner, Robert Benchley, H. Allen Smith, Gene Fowler, and F. Scott Fitzgerald—found themselves sitting in studio cubicles and paid as much as $2,500 a week for lines like, "Get along with yez, now."

Some found the experience unnerving and all but incomprehensible. Sterling Hayden, who shortly before World War II went from unemployed sailing captain to one of MGM's golden boys in a matter of months, outlined the price of his early fame in his autobigraphy, *Wanderer:* "You give a lot of yourself when they pay you to act like a star. They hold a lien not just on your working hours but on much of the time that a man should have as his own. Your time is shared with the picture in work, with their plans for your future, with the agents, and with the hacks who write for the fan magazines." Hayden escaped his lucrative serfdom in World War II, returned to it in 1946, and left again in 1959, by then thoroughly disgusted with the whole business of the star system: "There's nothing wrong with being an actor, if that's what a man wants. But there's everything wrong with achieving an exalted status simply because one photographs well and is able to handle dialogue put in one's mouth by others."

Some, perhaps more talented or with less finely-tuned sensibilities and enough reproducible magnetism to survive

the handicap of their ability, embraced the system with the élan of heirs born to the silver spoon and made it all work. For these few overachievers, it seemed that the studios could not do enough—at least for a time: entire pictures were plotted as little more than showcases for individual stars, elaborate and exquisitely furnished dressing rooms constructed, maids and secretaries provided, European vacations thrown in, houses and automobiles purchased, names planted in gossip columns with the solemn regularity of Dow-Jones averages, and marriages contrived and divorces arranged.

It was a smarmy adulation conducive to distension of the ego, as illustrated by an anecdote about Norma Shearer, who reportedly refused to say "Let 'em eat cake!" while filming *Marie Antoinette*. The coldhearted phrase, she said, did not fit her public image, and history be damned. The script was quickly rewritten, moving one commentator to wonder whether the picture should be billed as "Marie Antoinette starring in *Norma Shearer*."

FOR THE TALENTED and untalented alike, however, studio largesse was apt to have the permanence of a campaign promise, for Hollywood in this glittering era used up people, talent, and energy like the machine it was. "The chief drawback of the enjoyment of Hollywood fame," Gene Fowler noted in *Schnozzola,* his biography of Jimmy Durante (1951), "is that it comes all at once and then departs at the same rate of speed. After the celluloid dream is done, the ex-star awakens in a world of toothless tigers, shabby dancing bears, and groggy gypsies of Hasbeen Land. . . . Hollywood is a celluloid gut that must be nourished endlessly, an all-devouring gut that greedily takes in and speedily rids itself of talents fed to it from enchanted salvers. A victim of this gluttony enjoys a drugged moment of wealth, huzzas, and statuettes . . . but once the jaws of the man-eater close upon him, his lot becomes that of any other morsel swallowed at last night's supper show."

Ben Hecht, in his autobiography, *A Child of the Century*

The Cotton Blossom, *during a shooting session for* Showboat, *and the 115-foot, square-rigged schooner* Vitrix *(background), used in* Captains Courageous. *Both ships were purchased by Texas oilionaire Lamar Hunt for a Kansas City amusement park.*

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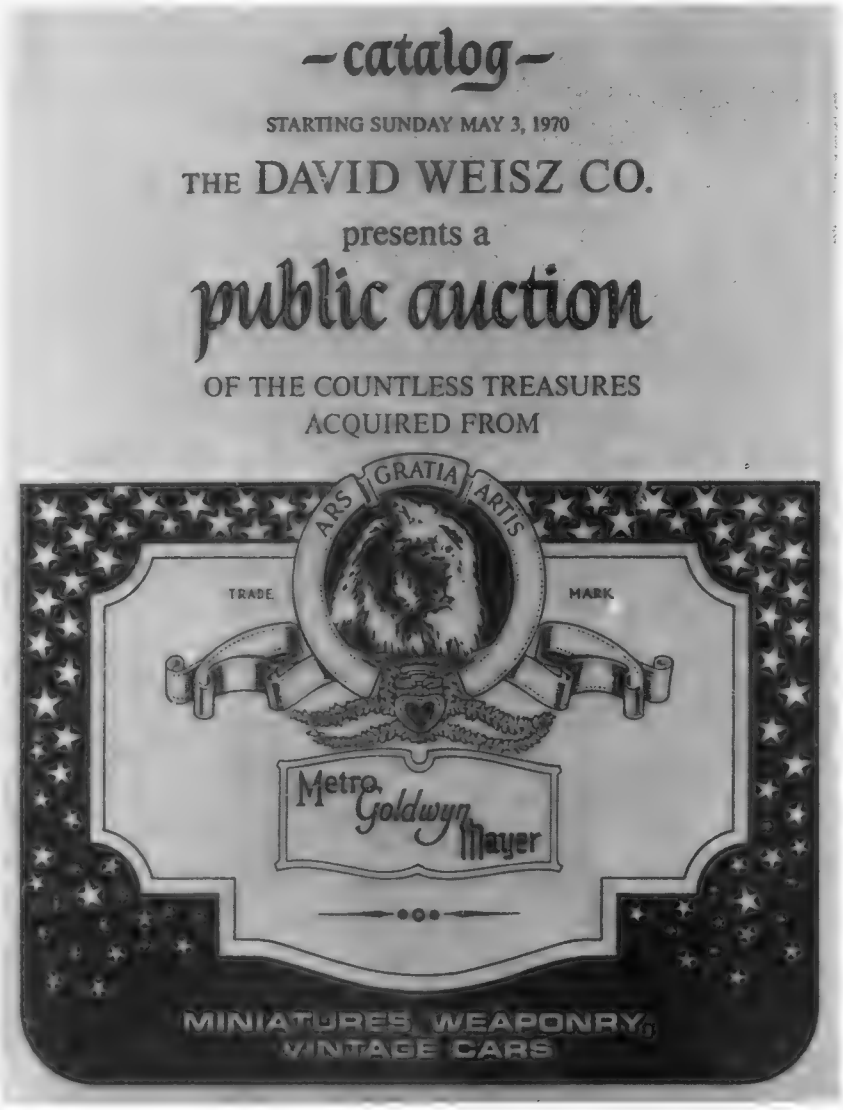

(1954), voiced similar laments for the sometimes brutal callousness of the machine, but he recalled as well the lambent delights that could transcend all the tinsel cruelties: "I remember, along with my indignation, the sunny streets of Hollywood, full of amiable and antic destinations. I remember studios humming with intrigue and happy-go-lucky excitements. I remember fine homes with handsome butlers and masterpieces on the walls; vivid people, long and noisy luncheons, nights of gaiety and gambling, hotel suites and rented palaces overrun with friends, partners, secretaries and happy servants." It was a game, he said, "a game played by a few thousand toy-minded folk."

It was a game the whole world watched, for with all its lunatic extravagances, its pinched meannesses and bloated sentimentality, its greed and venality, this gold rush Hollywood remained a cave of enchantments, a place where only myths were real. "Here," Carey McWilliams wrote in 1946, "was all America, America in flight from itself, America on an island."

No studio more typified this period than Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, and no studio head quite so characterized the breed as Louis B. Mayer, an "undersized magnate" who ran MGM like a personal satrapy from its founding in 1924 to his bitter departure in 1951. Stubborn, frequently dense, and pugnaciously defensive of banality ("I think my mother may have been a prostitute," actor John Gilbert once remarked to him in idle conversation; Mayer promptly hit him in the mouth

A brass bed is a brass bed, but this one might have been in even greater demand had the auctioneers emphasized the other film in which it played a key role: **Cat on a Hot Tin Roof.**

Displaying all the cheerful aspects of an eyeless skull, this carefully-structured non-house stands majestically on a non-street in a non-world on MGM's Lot 3 (facing page).

for slurring the name of motherhood), this former junk dealer nevertheless possessed a canny and muscular perception that enabled him to erect the most stupendous moviemaking machine in motion-picture history.

Mayer was gifted with a self-admitted (and often-proclaimed) identification with the tastes of the American public and governed by a determination to hire the best talent available, however pallid might be the properties on which it was put to work; the combination molded MGM into the *Saturday Evening Post* of motion-picture companies with a reliance on films that delineated, frequently with charm if rarely with art, the solid, middle-class virtues of mainstream America.

The most successful of these were the *Andy Hardy* and *Doctor Kildare* series, but there were scores of others, most of them resoundingly profitable. It was during his tenure, too, that the two most popular films in the company's history were produced: *The Wizard of Oz,* with Judy Garland, and *Gone with the Wind,* with Vivien Leigh and Clark Gable. *GWTW,* as it has become abbreviated in the trade, grossed more than fifty million dollars in its first fifteen years of periodic release, and at this writing it has been released again for the umpteenth time and will probably go on making money until the various prints of the film disintegrate or people stop going to the movies altogether. This film, perhaps more than any other, stands as an epitome of Hollywood's golden era, when MGM was the giant of the industry, for twenty-seven years the roar of the MGM lion was Mayer clearing his throat.

ONE DAY IN 1943, Mayer called to his side three score of the more shimmering stars on whom he had built his kingdom, summoned the press, and—characteristically jumping the gun a bit—threw a luncheon bash to celebrate MGM's twentieth anniversary. It was an impressive gathering, a mighty distillation of the Mayer years; on hand were such players as James Stewart, Wallace Beery, Spencer Tracy, Katherine Hepburn, George Murphy, Hedy Lamarr, Dame May Whitty, Greer Garson, Mickey Rooney, Van Johnson, Bert Lahr, and Jean-Pierre Aumont—some old, some new, but all products of a system that Mayer had helped to make as smooth-running a machine as a device for stamping out bottle caps. He gloated with forgivable pride. "This is the only business in the world," he said, "where the inventory goes home at night."

It was just as well that he gloated while he could, for by the time of the firm's twenty-fifth anniversary in 1949, he was in trouble—and so was MGM. Gross profits had dropped, and Mayer had to report a studio operating deficit of $6.5 million. Over the next three years, he struggled desperately to save his shaken empire, but it did little good; in August of 1951, the New York offices of Loew's, Inc., MGM's owners, asked him to resign, and he did—bitterly but helplessly. Dore Schary was made the new head of studio, but the company's difficulties continued: the studio reported another deficit at the end of 1951, again in 1953, and finally again in 1956,

Continued on page 59

The* Reno *in its heyday carried such notables as Ulysses S. Grant and William Tecumseh Sherman. Later it was featured in such epics as* Annie Get Your Gun *and* How the West Was Won. *At the auction it was purchased for $65,000.

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To the Memo
of
Daniel Brouel
Ezrah HALle
and
Henderson Cox
Who was supposed
To have Been Murdered
And Buried By Indians
On the Night of the 27 of
June 1818

Incident at Tragedy Springs

AN UNSOLVED MYSTERY OF THE CALIFORNIA TRAIL

BY FEROL EGAN

TRAGEDIES ON THE CALIFORNIA TRAIL usually occurred on the westward journey, but one memorable disaster took place on an eastward trip from the Sacramento Valley to the Salt Lake Valley. It happened in the early summer of 1848 and involved men who had soldiered with the Mormon Battalion during the Mexican War.

All these men were seasoned veterans of hard traveling. They had made the long march from Fort Leavenworth to Santa Fe, and from there had traveled deeper into Mexico, cutting west and crossing the Sierra Madre Occidental. Northwest of Tucson they had struck the Gila Trail, followed it to the Colorado Crossing, and then made the nightmare trek across the Colorado Desert to San Diego. Here, in the fall of 1847, they were discharged from the United States Army and started for home. At this point they received word, via Sam Brannan at Donner Lake, that supplies were short at Salt Lake City, and Brigham Young wanted the men to stay in California. Accordingly, they recrossed the Donner Pass and remained in California for nearly a year. During that time, some of the men worked as carpenters and laborers for Capt. John Sutter. They helped build his flour and sawmills, and were among the first men to see the yellow flakes of gold that meant the end of Sutter's dream of empire.

But though the lure of gold was great, the devotion of these men to their religion was even greater. On June 17, 1848, nineteen-year-old Henry Bigler and two companions left Sutter's flour mill at Natoma and rode into the dry, tawny foothills of the Mother Lode "to find a suitable place to rally, from which point all who were intending to go up to the Great Salt Lake would start." Their previous round trip over Donner Pass had convinced them that there must be an easier route across the Sierra Nevada.

A long day's journey from Natoma, Bigler and his companions found a good rallying place for the rest of the company. Eight miles southeast of what is now Placerville, at a spot they named Pleasant Valley, they built a pine-log corral and awaited the arrival of the homeward-bound party. By July 2 the full company had gathered. It consisted of 45 men, one woman (the wife of 1st Sgt. William Coray), 22 wagons, 150 head of horses and mules, about the same number of cattle, and two small Russian cannons from Fort Ross, for which they had paid Captain Sutter about $150 in gold.

Along with gear for the trail, most of the men carried pouches of placer gold they had either panned with Indian baskets or picked out of rocks with their knives during their spare time as they worked on the Coloma sawmill. But their thoughts were no longer about gold. As they gathered in the shade of foothill oaks and yellow pines, they wondered what had happened to the three scouts—Daniel Browett, Ezra H. Allen, and Henderson Cox—who had left Pleasant Valley on June 25 to seek a mountain pass. All three were dependable; Browett, formerly a fourth sergeant, was chosen leader.

ON JULY 3 THE COMPANY decided it could not wait any longer for the return of the scouts and moved out of Pleasant Valley, taking a line of march along the divide between the South Fork of the American River and Cosumnes River. Locating their straying oxen detained Henry Bigler and a few others, but as they made camp the following

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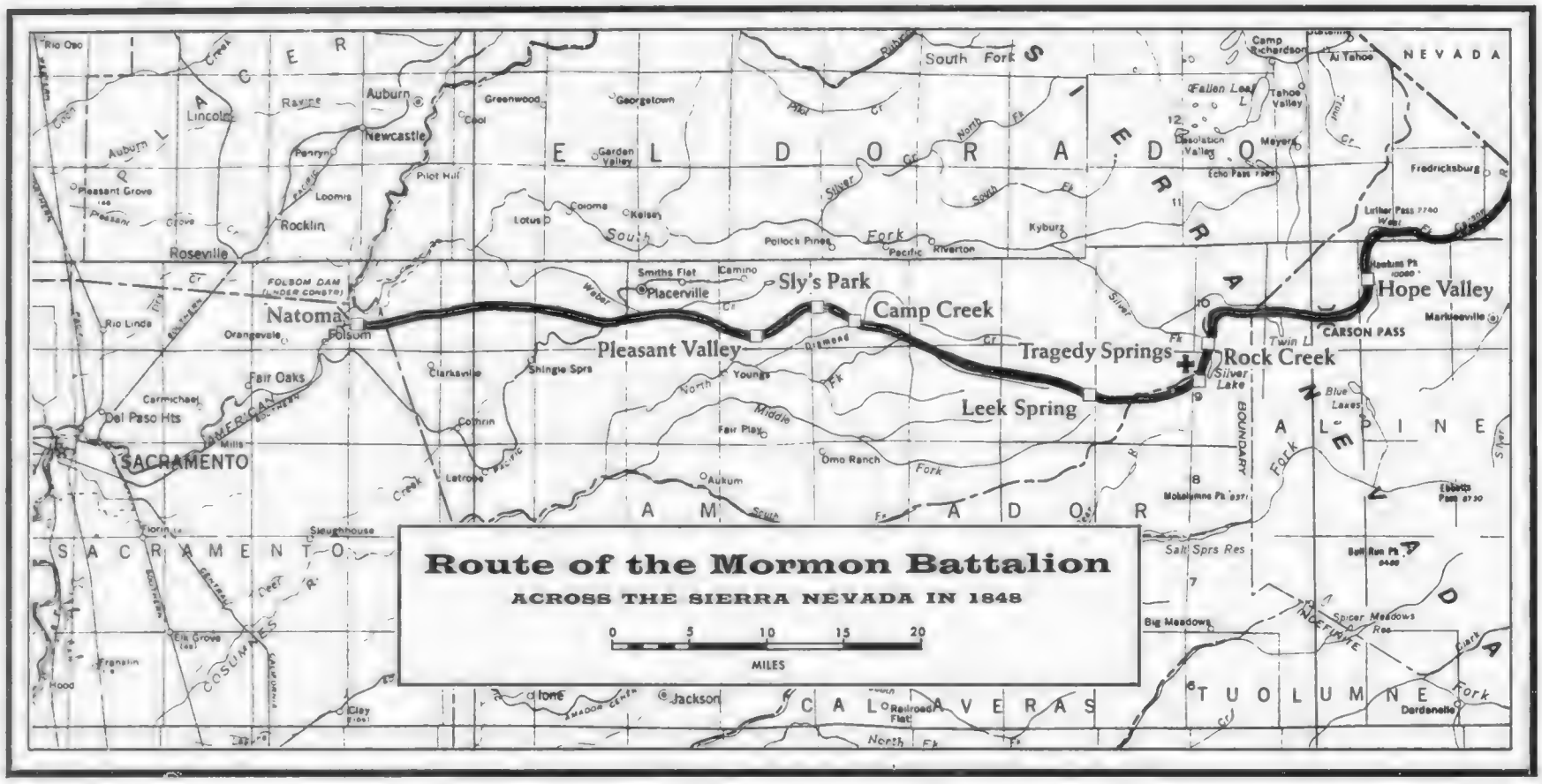

day, they heard the echoing report of a cannon fired by the main body of the company to celebrate Independence Day.

By the next day the whole company was united again, and they decided to rest for a few days in a meadow which James C. Sly had found. While they relaxed at this spot, about two miles south of the Cosumnes River, they sent out a search party of ten men to look for the missing scouts.

Nine days later the search party returned, having found no trace of the missing men. However, they reported that they had located a reasonably good pass that would accommodate the wagons if they took time to do a little road building.

For the next two days the men worked on the road and on July 16 stopped at a place they named Camp Creek. The country was proving to be rougher than first reports had indicated, and the brush and rocks were giving the wagons a considerable beating.

Moving steadily upward through buck brush, mountain misery, and outcroppings of glaciated granite, the men hacked a wagon road to another good campground at Leek Spring, where there was good water, plenty of grass for the livestock, and lots of wild leeks. Here most of the company rested on July 18, while young Bigler and four others broke about ten more miles of path for the next day's travel. As they hiked back, they passed another good spring near which they saw what appeared to be a recent campsite with a campfire pit. Just beyond there was a fresh grave near "an old wickey-up." At first they assumed the grave was an Indian's, but as they walked back to their party, it occurred to them that perhaps their own comrades lay beneath that soil.

When Bigler's party reported what they had seen, the Mormons decided they should appoint another leader to replace Brother Browett until they were sure about his fate. Former 2nd Lt. Samuel Thompson of Company C was selected as captain of the whole party. In addition, captains were appointed for each group of ten persons. A well-disciplined and cooperative group, the Mormons did not want to be caught off guard if it became necessary to do any fighting.

ON THE MORNING of July 19, Captain Thompson gave the order to hit the trail, and the company moved away from Leek Spring. They traveled slowly along the rough path that Bigler and others had made on the crest of the ridge, and within five or six miles they came to the place the road workers had reported. It was a beautiful spot with tall firs and pines and a fine spring of cold mountain water. But the grave spoiled the serenity of the scene, and they feared what might lie beneath the freshly-turned earth.

Their worst expectations were confirmed as they shoveled the two feet of dirt out of the shallow grave: Daniel Browett and Henderson Cox were lying there on their faces, and Ezra Allen on his back. All were stripped of their clothing, and their bodies were badly mutilated. Young Allen's face appeared to have been split open with a blow from an ax blade, and he had been shot in one eye. All the bodies were cut and punctured as though someone had pushed arrows into the flesh in an attempt to make it appear that Indians had killed them. Henry Bigler felt sick at what he saw.

The discovery ended any thought of traveling farther that day, so the men searched the area for clues to the murder.

Arrows were scattered all around the immediate region, some still in good condition. Many of them were stained with blood, as were some of the granite boulders. Everything pointed to a desperate struggle for life. Furthermore, all the possessions of the dead men were gone: clothing, firearms, saddles, horses and mules, and the gold that brothers Browett and Cox had been carrying. About fifteen feet from the grave, however, the searchers found the buckskin pouch of gold dust that Brother Allen had carried inside his shirt, hung on a leather thong around his neck. Brother Allen's purse, as Azariah Smith noted in his journal, "was brought and given to his wife."

During the remainder of this sorrowful day, the Mormons camped near the spring. They posted a guard for the night, but sometime after darkness set in, something frightened and stampeded the livestock. No doubt thinking they might be under attack, Captain Thompson ordered the men to "limber up a cannon and let her speak once." While this cannon shot in the dark of night may have frightened off raiders or a curious grizzly bear, it also gave the bolting livestock one more scare. When they took a tally at dawn, the men found that a third of the animals had hightailed it in all directions.

They spent the morning of July 20 rounding up the scattered livestock. In the afternoon they buried the murdered men, covering the grave with granite stones "to prevent wild beasts from tearing them out, and to stand as a monument to all who may chance to pass that way." After some deliberation, which took into account both the number of days and the possible miles per day, it was decided that the scouts probably had been killed on June 27. Giving this place of disaster the name Tragedy Springs, the Mormons then carved the following inscription on a large fir tree:

> TO THE MEMORY OF DANIEL BROWETT, EZRAH H. ALLEN AND HENDERSON COX WHO WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN MURDERED AND BURIED BY INDIANS ON THE NIGHT OF THE 27 OF JUNE 1848

The next day the party moved on, stopping at a place they called Rock Creek, close to present Silver Lake. In the next six days they climbed upward through rougher and rougher country to the headwaters of the South Fork of the American River. Making a wagon road through this land was slow, hard work, and many wagons broke down and had to be repaired.

By July 29 the men of the Mormon Battalion had crossed the Sierra Nevada with their wagons and made camp at the head of what they called Hope Valley. From here they traveled down the canyon of "Pass Creek"—without doubt the West Fork of the Carson River—constructing two bridges across the river as they built their wagon road all the way to the Carson Valley and Pilot River (the present Carson River). Thus, by August 5 they had succeeded in making a good wagon route from west to east across the Sierra Nevada—a route which by rights should be named the Mormon Battalion Pass, but in fact is called Kit Carson Pass.

TODAY'S TRAVELER who takes California Highway 88 across the mountains is following the approximate route of the Mormon pioneers. Many place names are the same, and at Tragedy Springs it is even possible to visit the grave of the murdered soldiers, picnic at the old Mormon camping ground, drink water from the same spring, and follow part of the Emigrant Trail along the ridge. While the carved tree that marked what happened here gave way to winter winds in 1930–31, the carved portion of its trunk may be seen at the Museum of the California Gold Discovery Site at Coloma.

But one cannot find at Tragedy Springs a solution to the mystery surrounding the death of the three scouts. The few existing clues lie in the writings of the men who were there—Henry Bigler, Zadok K. Judd, Azariah Smith, and Robert Pixton. All these keepers of journals point out similar facts which make it nearly impossible to place the blame for the murder on the Maidu and Washo Indians who hunted and fished that country.

An analysis of the evidence leads to the following conclusions: first, a murder requires a motive, and these tribes had none. The gold rush had not started, and the pressure of white intrusion was yet to come. Second, even though these tribes buried their own dead, it is not likely they would have taken the time to bury men they had killed in a raid. Third, all the descriptions of the dead indicate that the arrows were not shot but pushed into the bodies, to make it appear as though Indians were responsible. Fourth, if a party of warriors had killed the Mormons, it is doubtful that they would have left perfectly good arrows behind. Fifth, Indians would not have taken the gold which was carried by Daniel Browett and Henderson Cox since they did not value it. Sixth, Mormons who had truly believed that Indians had committed this atrocity would not have invited them to come and stay the night. Seventh, none of the Indians they saw carried firearms, yet Ezra Allen had been shot through the eye. And eighth, if the Mormons had been convinced that Indians were the killers, they would not have carved on the fir tree that the men were "*supposed to have been* murdered and buried by Indians."

So to this day the murder mystery of Tragedy Springs remains unsolved. If brothers Browett, Cox, and Allen were not killed by local Indians, then who ambushed them, and why? Were they waylaid by whites or killed by some of the Sacramento Valley Indians who worked for Capt. John Sutter?

All that remains are the place, the grave, the carved tree trunk, and the written record of other members of the Mormon Battalion; yet the intriguing mystery lingers on, awaiting the final clues that can close the story of the incident at Tragedy Springs.

Ferol Egan *is an associate editor of* THE AMERICAN WEST *and author of* The El Dorado Trail, *recently published by McGraw-Hill.*

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Image Lake and Tenpeak Mountain (center) in the Northern Cascades, Washington, lie within the North Cascades National Park.

The wilderness and the idea of the wilderness
is one of the permanent homes of the human spirit.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

A Home for the Spirit

A Brief History of the Wilderness Preservation Movement—
The Story of an Idea Given the Strength of Law

BY RODERICK NASH

In the 1940s, when business travelers still rode the intercity trains, Howard Zahniser was uneasy about club cars. As executive director of the Wilderness Society, he hesitated to get involved in the inevitable "what's your line?" conversation that accompanied a second round of drinks in elbow-to-elbow companionship. "I'm a lobbyist," he would say; or perhaps he might manage a lame, "I'm concerned with conservation."

Yet the first time he blurted out the whole truth of the matter, he was rewarded by expressions of genuine interest and commendation rather than the polite and deprecatory smiles he thought must be the lot of an impractical visionary. After that, he spoke up—to the interest and pleasure of seamless-tube salesmen and tableware specialists, who often countered with recollections of a boyhood camping trip, a summer hike, or a slice of ancestral lore. And by the time the cocktail-hour companions had adjourned to the dining car, confirmed urban businessmen had usually slipped some of Zahniser's Wilderness Society literature into their attaché cases, glad to find that "something was being done."

In those club cars Zahniser discovered that by the mid–twentieth century wilderness was capable of inspiring a citizens' crusade in the United States. Directing this public pressure to the political process, Zahniser and his colleagues were able to lead the preservation movement to dramatic victories in 1956 and 1964. The resulting national policy of protecting wilderness suggests that although Americans may be among the world's most wasteful people, they have also been at the forefront in environmental planning.

What makes the success of the wilderness preservation movement so remarkable is the intensity of previous antipathy toward wild country. For centuries it signified a dark and fearful region, a challenge to the control and order man sought to impose on the natural world through cultivation and civilization. In western thought, the Judeo-Christian conception of wild country as a moral wasteland cursed by God, a place of punishment and temptation, added to this connotation.

The discovery and settlement of the New World offered abundant opportunity for expression of antipathy toward wilderness. Safety, comfort, even survival depended on overcoming wild environment. And for the first Americans, as for medieval Europeans, the forest hid savage men and beasts—all the dark creatures of the folk imagination. The conquest of the wilderness *had* to be the dominant concern of pioneers; inevitably, they judged wild country by utilitarian criteria and spoke of their relation to it in military terms. Countless writings of the frontier period spoke of the wilderness as the "enemy" to be "conquered" or "vanquished."

But as civilization began to chip away at the American wilderness, attitudes slowly changed. Unlike the frontiersmen, city-dwellers were spared hand-to-hand combat with nature and could afford to view the wilderness as something novel, exciting, and deliciously dangerous. This romantic attraction to wilderness, coupled with the perception that too much civilization might be producing undesirable changes in American character, values, and institutions had, by the early twentieth century, led to a major reversal in public sentiment.

The wilderness preservation movement reflected this change. Between 1908 and 1913 John Muir, founder of the Sierra Club, spearheaded the defense of Yosemite National Park's Hetch Hetchy Valley, which San Francisco sought as a site for a municipal reservoir.

This was the first major wilderness controversy in American history, and although Muir and his colleagues lost their battle in 1913, they gained even in defeat. By writing open letters to the American people, circulating brochures to the press, and testifying at congressional hearings, a few hard-working individuals—chiefly from the Sierra Club and the Appalachian Mountain Club—were able to mold scattered sentiment into a broad public protest.

The Hetch Hetchy experience taught the preservationists the importance of professional advocacy and strategically timed publicity, which had characterized the campaign of their successful opponents. They also learned through defeat that

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they needed a stronger rationale for preserving wilderness in the twentieth century. It is true that Muir's warmed-over transcendentalism, which held that the wild landscape mirrored God and those who would develop it were "temple destroyers," had won many friends for wilderness.

But the growing material demands that pressed at the edges of the nation's still undeveloped country needed a more pragmatic counterattack. This was provided by a growing belief that uncontrolled wilderness had value as a place in which to obtain relief from the pressures of a highly controlled social existence. Robert Marshall, a millionaire who devoted his life to wilderness as forester, hiker, and explorer, explained in 1930 that some men have a powerful "psychological urge" for the challenge, the adventure, and above all, "the freedom of the wilderness." Such men, Marshall declared, deplored the "horrible banality" and "drabness" of civilized life. Their very sanity depends on periodically renouncing civilization and pushing into the backcountry.

Whereas some preservationists stressed the value of wilderness as a challenge to overcivilized Americans, others noted its importance as a reservoir of silence and peace in an increasingly frantic age. Sigurd Olson, the late defender of the canoe-country near Lake Superior, contended that preserving wild sanctuaries means "more than just the preservation of rocks and trees and scenery. It is a battle for the minds that have become increasingly engrossed with the machine."

Benton MacKaye, a pioneer regional planner and father of the Appalachian Trail, also began his justification of the existence of wilderness with the thought that "the first thing to understand is not the wilderness but the human." Looking back into the history of the race, MacKaye saw a change from a primitive, to a rural, and finally to an urban, environment. The result was the implantation in human nature—especially in that of Americans, who had condensed the process into three centuries—of the desire to be "the pioneer, the husbandman, [and] the townsman" all at once. It followed that the environment was optimum when it met the needs of our triple personality. The preservationists' argument, then, was that wilderness was a vital human need, not a luxury or plaything.

In the woods we return to reason and faith.

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–1882)

In the last decade, advocates of wilderness, sensing public concern over the loss of personal identity in a mass society, have argued that wild country preserves the possibility of deviation, the necessity of self-reliance, and, consequently, is a means of resisting the other-directing and overorganizing tendencies of the age. Referring to George Orwell's frightening forecast, Sigurd Olson contended that liberty as well as wilderness is at stake. "I believe," he declared in 1961, "that we are fighting for something far beyond our imagining. When we think of the book *1984* . . . we realize we are in danger of losing the spiritual values which have been part of us."

Whether one actually goes into the wilderness or not, Wallace Stegner has observed, just *knowing* that civilization is not everywhere fortifies man's capacity for hope. "If we ever let the remaining wilderness be destroyed," Stegner warns, "we are committed . . . to a headlong drive into our technological termite-life, the Brave New World of a completely man-controlled environment." The advantage of this argument has been that it appeals even to those who have no intention of visiting wilderness themselves.

Scientists have constructed other arguments for the importance of wilderness. Wild land serves as a laboratory in which natural processes operate undisturbed by a technological civilization and without which we would lose our criterion of normal, healthy land. Moreover, many vital experiments in ecology, dendrology, botany, and most of the other life sciences can be performed only in wilderness preserves. Research, that magic word of the twentieth century, thus has been added to the defense of wilderness.

Science and philosophy have joined on this issue, as on

others. Aldo Leopold, brilliant philosopher of the man-land relationship and one of the first professional wildlife managers, has argued that modern man's ability to control his environment entails a responsibility to respect the integrity of the other forms of life that share our planet. For Leopold, man's responsibility is not a matter of economics, or even of aesthetics, but of ethics. Beginning in the 1930s, he called for a code of decency in man's treatment of the natural world similar to the one that exists—at least in theory—in social relations. The "land ethic," as Leopold called this concept, stems directly from an "ecological conscience" which reveals nature as a community to which man belongs, not a commodity he possesses. Wilderness represents land in ecological harmony, a standard against which man can measure the effects of his violence and, hopefully, from which he can learn "an intelligent humility" toward his place in nature.

Another line of reasoning would preserve wilderness as a part of America's heritage. Following Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis, some argue that wild country was a major force shaping American character and institutions. It follows that without wilderness Americans might lose what impelled them to uniqueness and, many believe, greatness.

For the average citizen, however, a desire for recreation in beautiful surroundings or, perhaps, a vague need to "get away from it all" has had more influence than philosophic discussion. Consequently, publicizers who have used the word and

In God's wilderness lies the hope of the world—the great fresh, unblighted, unredeemed wilderness. The galling harness of civilization drops off, and the wounds heal ere we are aware.

—JOHN MUIR (1838–1914)

the picture to introduce Americans to their remaining wilderness have had great effect. Immensely important in this respect were Stephen T. Mather, the first director of the National Park Service, and his colleagues Horace M. Albright and Robert Sterling Yard. In the decade after 1915 these men served as a sort of chamber of commerce for wilderness. They produced an astonishing volume of publicity and stimulated general periodicals to carry articles about the parks. About the same time, the railroad-sponsored "See America First" campaign attracted attention to the nation's wilderness, pointing out that it was unmatched in Europe. And, ironically, the advent of the automobile, that nemesis of preservationists today, cannot be overlooked as a factor in the wilderness movement. Wilderness areas in the national parks and national forests are no longer mere names or pictures, but realistic targets for the family vacation. Such personal involvement has done much to expand the social base on which the movement rests.

WIDESPREAD PUBLIC CONCERN alone could not have preserved wilderness. The success of the preservation movement in the twentieth century has depended as well upon improved techniques for influencing federal land-managment policy. The Hetch Hetchy controversy showed the power of citizens' protests, but it also revealed the importance of having professional lobbyists in Washington to conduct the infighting that could translate popularity into political decision.

The National Parks Association played this role after 1918, and in 1935 the Wilderness Society was formed, with an executive director, Robert Sterling Yard, and a journal, *Living Wilderness*. From offices in the capital the society fought a succession of battles on behalf of the nation's wild country.

Solitude is as needful to the imagination as society is wholesome for the character.

—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL (1819–1891)

These efforts came to a climax in the 1950s in the century's most important wilderness controversy. Dinosaur National Monument on the Colorado-Utah border was being threatened by a proposed Bureau of Reclamation dam on the Green River at Echo Park. There was no question that the Southwest could use the water and hydropower that Echo Park Dam would supply. Preservationists, however, felt there were even better arguments for maintaining in their wild state the deep canyons of the Green and its tributary, the Yampa. Beyond that, the sanctity of all national parks and monuments seemed at stake.

Regarding the controversy as a test case, the advocates of wilderness prepared to use every weapon at their disposal—including public support, by now a significant force. When John Muir led the Hetch Hetchy protest, there were only seven national and two state conservation organizations. Fifty years later the numbers had jumped to 78 national and 236 state groups.

To lead this wealth of organized sentiment, preservationists called on David R. Brower and Howard Zahniser, executive directors of the Sierra Club and the Wilderness Society respectively. Typical of the new breed of wilderness defenders who merged in the Echo Park controversy, they set for themselves two major goals: the creation of a massive public protest against the dam, and the molding of a wilderness lobby capable of using this sentiment effectively in the arena of power politics. To achieve the first goal, hard-hitting illustrated pamphlets asked the public: *"Will you DAM the Scenic Wild Canyons of Our National Park System?"* and *"What is Your Stake in Dinosaur?"* A professionally produced motion picture, in color, was shown throughout the country. Wallace Stegner edited a book of essays and photographs showing the

The Wind River Mountains in the Bridger Wilderness Area, Wyoming.

importance of keeping Dinosaur wild. Conservation periodicals featured numerous articles on the monument. More important from the standpoint of national opinion, the controversy received extensive coverage in *Life*, *Collier's*, the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Newsweek*, the *Reader's Digest*, and influential newspapers such as the New York *Times*.

BEGINNING WITH the House and Senate hearings on the Colorado River Storage Project in 1954, preservationists carried Dinosaur's defense into politics. Using the example of Hetch Hetchy to strengthen their arguments, the nation's foremost wilderness spokesmen delivered carefully prepared statements to the legislators. And when the com-

mittees, dominated by western congressmen, reported favorably on Echo Park Dam, preservationists worked feverishly with direct mailings, flyers, editorials, and articles in an effort to raise a storm of protest.

The upshot was a flood of mail that poured into the House in the spring of 1954. The ratio of those who wanted Dinosaur wild to those favoring the dam was eighty to one. The result: a postponement of congressional consideration of the entire project in question.

Preparing for a renewal of the Echo Park controversy in the Eighty-fourth Congress in 1955, the preservationists made it clear to their opponents that while they sympathized with the need of the Southwest for water, they were prepared to use their public support to block passage of the whole Colorado River Storage Project unless Echo Park Dam was eliminated. Reclamation and hydropower interests, in other words, were confronted with a choice between no development and development that respected wilderness values.

The richest values of wilderness lie not in the days of Daniel Boone, nor even in the present, but rather in the future.

—ALDO LEOPOLD (1887–1948)

In the face of all these objections, the Senate nevertheless authorized the Project with a dam at Echo Park. All but three western senators supported the measure. In the House, however, the pressure of public sentiment for preserving wilderness was making itself more effectively felt. On July 8, 1955, the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs approved a Colorado River Storage Project Bill *without* the controversial dam. "We hated to lose it," Representative William A. Dawson of Utah explained, but "the opposition from conservation organizations has been such as to convince us . . . that authorizing legislation could not be passed unless this dam was taken out." Dawson added that the proponents of the dam had "neither the money nor the organization to cope with the resources and mailing lists" of the preservationists.

Many supporters of Dinosaur still did not feel victory was secure. In confirmation of their fears, congressmen and governors of the Colorado Basin states met in Denver on November 1, 1955, to discuss ways of restoring the Echo Park Dam to the project. Learning of the meeting, Howard Zahniser rushed a full-page open letter into the Denver *Post*. He made it clear that unless the dam were irrevocably deleted, the wilderness lobby would use every legal means to block the project. Thus put in the awkward position of defeating their own interests if they continued to insist on Echo Park Dam, the Denver strategists promised to drop it from their plans. In the defeat of Echo Park Dam the American wilderness movement enjoyed its finest hour. For the first time preservation had prevailed in a major confrontation.

THE SUCCESSFUL DEFENSE of Dinosaur encouraged preservationists to press for a more general affirmation of wilderness in American civilization. Hopes centered on the possibility of a national system of wilderness preserves with full legal endorsement. As early as the 1930s Robert Marshall had pushed for a federal land-management policy that would include the permanent protection of wild areas throughout the country, while Benton MacKaye had long advocated a system of wilderness belts along mountain ridges.

In wildness is the preservation of the world.

—HENRY DAVID THOREAU (1817–1862)

But it was Howard Zahniser who stirred Congress into action. In 1951 Zahniser used the occasion of an address before the Sierra Club's Second Biennial Wilderness Conference to broach the idea of a national wilderness preservation system. He spoke of how the National Park Service, the United States Forest Service, and other agencies might be made legally responsible for preserving the wilderness under their jurisdiction. Only an act of Congress could alter the wilderness character of such an area.

After seeing the Echo Park controversy through to its conclusion, Zahniser and other preservationists helped persuade Senator Hubert Humphrey and Representative John P. Saylor to introduce bills to the second session of the Eighty-fourth Congress. Written in large part by Zahniser, the bills stated that it was the intent of Congress "to secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness." They went on to itemize eighty areas in the national forests, forty-eight in the national parks or monuments, twenty in national wildlife refuges and ranges, and fifteen on Indian reservations that, after certain approvals, would constitute the National Wilderness Preservation System.

The initial bills also called for the creation of a National Wilderness Preservation Council, composed of federal land administrators and private citizens, which would gather information concerning wilderness and make recommendations to Congress and the president for the maintenance and possible expansion of the reserved areas.

Congress lavished more time and effort on the wilderness bill than on any other measure in American conservation history. From June, 1957, until May, 1964, there were nine separate hearings on the proposal, and over six thousand pages of testimony were collected. The bill itself was modified and rewritten numerous times. One reason for the extraordinary delay in reaching a decision was the vigorous opposition to the permanent preservation of wilderness from wood-using industries; oil, grazing, and mining interests; most professional foresters; some government bureaus; and proponents of mass

XUM

recreation whose plans depended on mechanized access to outdoor areas. Adhering to the multiple-use conception of the function of the public domain, the opponents contended that the bill locked up millions of acres in the interests of a small number of hardy, and allegedly selfish, campers.

In defense of the wilderness system, preservationists argued that it did not remove land from productive purposes but only gave legal sanction to areas already administered as wilderness. They pointed out that the most land the system would ever include was about fifty million acres—roughly 2 percent of the nation. And they added, in David Brower's words, that "the wilderness we now have is all . . . men will ever have."

The succession of hearings on the wilderness bill revealed a remarkable volume of grass-roots preservation sentiment, which professional preservationists translated into political leverage. Thousands of citizens with no greater commitment to wilderness than having enjoyed backpacking took the time to communicate their opinions. During Senate hearings conducted in Oregon, California, Utah, and New Mexico during November, 1958, for instance, 1,003 letters were received favoring the bill and only 129 opposing it.

Opposition virtually ceased when the bill was altered in 1962 and 1963 to eliminate the National Wilderness Preservation Council, to exclude temporarily from the system all but fifty-four areas (slightly over nine million acres) in the national forests, and to make every subsequent addition dependent on a full act of Congress. In this form the bill passed in the House on July 30, 1964, by a vote of 373 to 1.

In August a Senate-House conference committee adjusted the more liberal Senate version to meet the representatives' requirements, and on September 3, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson's signature established the National Wilderness Preservation System.

The momentum generated by the establishment of the National Wilderness Preservation System carried the wilderness movement to a series of impressive recent triumphs. In quick succession well organized public criticism killed a giant dam on the Yukon River, Alaska, a jetport in Florida's Everglades, and two dams in the Grand Canyon. California's coastal redwoods and the North Cascades of Washington were the objects of successful preservation campaigns. And in 1968 the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System opened a new dimension in wilderness protection.

On the other hand, the development of oil fields in northern Alaska promised massive disruption of a wilderness environment. In the "lower forty-nine" the frontier hangover of short-sighted utilitarianism can be depended upon to menace even protected wilderness to say nothing of the *de facto* variety. But preservationists face such challenges with the advantage of knowing that the nation has formally expressed

Mt. Jefferson (10,450 feet) is surrounded by lush coniferous forest in Oregon's Mt. Jefferson Wilderness Area.

its intent to keep a portion of its land wild. One of the most remarkable turnabouts in the history of ideas has transformed the dominant American attitude toward wilderness from antipathy or, at best, apathy, to multi-faceted appreciation.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE

The written record of the American wilderness preservation movement is not large. The author's *Wilderness and the American Mind* is a history of ideas from the time of the Old Testament to the present, and its notes and bibliography will lead to most related studies of importance.

Three new books have made important contributions to understanding the growth of wilderness enthusiasm in the present century: Donald Swain, *Wilderness Defender: Horace M. Albright and Conservation* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1970); Peter J. Schmitt, *Back to Nature: The Arcadian Myth in Urban America* (Oxford University Press, New York, 1969); and G. Edward White, *The Eastern Establishment and the Western Experience* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1968).

The best available account of wilderness and the national parks is John Ise, *Our National Park Policy: A Critical History* (Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1961). Michael McCloskey, "The Wilderness Act of 1964: Its Background and Meaning," *Oregon Law Review*, 45 (1966), 288–321, is an excellent starting place to obtain an understanding of this unprecedented law.

Roderick Nash, *associate professor of history and co-chairman of environmental studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara, is author of* Wilderness and the American Mind *(1967),* The American Environment *(1968), and* Grand Canyon of the Living Colorado *(1970). Mr. Nash is a veteran whitewater boatman and professional river guide.*

Running the rapids in the Middle Fork of the Salmon River Primitive Area. The Middle Fork is also part of the National Wild and Scenic River System, created by Act of Congress in 1968 to keep wild rivers in their unspoiled condition.

XUM

A Matter of Opinion

RECLAMATION: In Reply

By William W. Porter

"Reclamation—the rise and fall of an American idea" by Paul S. Taylor, (THE AMERICAN WEST, July, 1970) is a particularly valuable history of the land movement, especially since the sources are not conveniently available, and apparently contain much personal file material. The article's conclusion that reclamation benefits were not justly distributed, however, does not necessarily follow.

There was, of course, speculation, and there still is. Whether it be on land, the New York Stock Exchange, or the church bingo game, the American people consider speculation as a right that they won't give up easily. The biggest speculator of all in western lands was the federal government. It acquired 1,462,466,560 acres of land in the 48 states at 5¢ per acre. To open it up, the government gave the railroads proprietary rights only in 91.3 millions acres, or about 6.3 percent, which is less than the usual access road area in a modern subdivision. Then they sold off the proprietary rights at 25 times what they paid for the whole title. There was no land give-away. Government disposed of only proprietary rights, retaining sovereign rights including the right to tax the land and almost all operations incidental to it.

Professor Taylor's figure of a crop value on reclamation lands, which has risen to $1.7 billion annually, indicates a substantial income tax revenue. And $1.7 billion annual crop value on the 8 million reclamation acres also indicates substantial real estate taxes. Furthermore, the $10 million was no subsidy to landowners. It was spent on projects for taxable wages and materials, to the benefit of the American people. Without doubt the people, through their governments, have done very well on their $10 billion investment in reclamation.

Taylor seems greatly concerned that the water was not always "limited to 160 acres per individual landowner." He states that there are large farms in California, and implies, without evidence, that this is bad. He quotes Senator Paul Douglas who thinks ". . . the small farmers who might use the land are in the future" because of "a mighty combination of landowners." Taylor then concludes in the last paragraph that "the political power of giant landowners has taken precedence over people," and ends with a Paul Gates quote on the "ease with which large landowners could twist and subvert for their own benefit land laws designed for the landless."

The clear fact is that Douglas is wrong. The 160-acre irrigated arid land farm is not "in the future," but is long gone except for a few areas growing citrus, dates, and other specialty crops for which there is a limited demand. For many years 160 acres has not been an economic unit. The 160-acre limit was imposed in the era of the horsedrawn plow and the army mule, and is equally obsolete. Today the country is fed by mechanized agriculture.

Strict enforcement of the 160-acre limitation invokes the un-American principle of entailment. The 160-acre owner, when forced to sell because of age, ill health, or any other reason, is not permitted to sell to the obvious buyer, a neighbor, but must suffer the hardship of going afar for an unsophisticated buyer or a speculator.

There is a logical *physical* explanation of what happened, and it must supplement the written record to make accurate history. It is not necessary to assume that people who owned more than 160 acres were evil, and it is unfair to attribute corruption to legislators because certain people owned large blocks of land. It is obvious today that the irrigated farm acreage of California is not operated by people whose specialty is political chicanery, but by people with the agricultural competence to feed the state. The alternative to the conclusions of professors Taylor, Douglas, and Gates is that the numerous *unrecorded* conferences between large landowners and legislators did not savor of the inferred corruption, but were legitimately educational; and that some legislators, in their own right, had knowledge of agriculture. The views of landowners may have prevailed, not because they were large, but because they were right. Such is the deduction from *physical* history. Legislators would not entail the unfortunate small owner's rights, nor would they permit the state's agricultural land to be fragmented into a 160-acre checkerboard of desolate uneconomic units.

The recognition of this interpretation by the Public Land Law Review Commission was emphasized in a review of the Commission's Report by the *Farm Journal*, August, 1970: "The land that is sold shouldn't be 'burdened by artificial and obsolete restraints such as acreage limitations on individual holdings,' the commission says. Continuing limitations that were designed for an earlier era is not wise. 'Modern labor-saving machinery is costly and must be applied to larger acreage in order to achieve reduction in unit costs.'"

William W. Porter, *of Palmdale, California, is an independent geologist.*

This page, A MATTER OF OPINION, *is provided as an open forum. Contributions are invited, but should be limited to 750 words and must be signed.*

Frontier Law and Order: Ten Essays

REVIEWED BY ROBERT TRENNERT

WITH ALL THE present concern about law enforcement and order in the streets, it is interesting to discover in Philip Jordan's *Frontier Law and Order* that the 19th century frontier legal system faced many of the same problems encountered today. This work, a collection of ten individual essays, seven of which have been previously published, concerns itself principally with the most common problems of frontier lawlessness. Such subjects as gambling, mob violence, horse theft, carrying weapons in public, prostitution, and the condition of penal institutions are studied in some depth. The author's approach is to analyze the laws enacted by society against vice, disorder, and violence and then to observe the working of these laws in practice. In this manner he manages to keep to a minimum the recording of a few spectacular episodes and deeds of famous bad men as they flouted the law.

Frontier Law and Order: Ten Essays by Philip D. Jordan *(University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 1970; 182 pp., index, $6.95).*

A number of impressions stand out in these essays. Crime and violence have not suddenly burst upon the nation as a new social problem, but have been a nearly constant and agonizing concern for our nation since its beginnings. Furthermore, complaints about the increase in the crime rate have always been with us, and no one section of the nation enjoyed a monopoly on lawlessness. The Wild West of the 1880's was no more violent or disorderly than the Mississippi valley in the 1820's. The picture of lawlessness presented in the essays does not mean, according to the author, that Americans have been more prone to crime than other nations, only that they have been willing to tolerate, ignore, and sometimes even approve, a rather large variety of illegal activities.

For example, carrying deadly weapons in public was usually one of the first prohibitions enacted by frontier governments. Yet public sentiment—because men liked weapons, believed they displayed manly qualities, or were considered necessary for self-defense—usually condoned the practice of packing a pistol or Bowie knife, often with unfortunate results. Another popular justification for illegally carrying weapons, and one which many Americans still regard as sacred, is the constitutional argument of the "right" of citizens to keep and bear arms. Jordan interprets bearing of arms to include only the military meaning, something 19th century Americans generally refused to concede.

A similar case is made for "ladies of the evening." Though nearly all communities were provided with laws against immoral activities, in many instances the shady ladies practiced their profession, despite some well publicized clean-ups, without too much harassment and mistreatment by local authorities. The point simply being that if the frontiersmen felt insecure, then laws seemed indispensable; but, if the laws interfered with pleasure, then they were to be ignored. Essentially, aside from violent and revolting crimes, lawlessness of a seemingly harmless nature was permitted by a general apathy.

Another reason for the prevalence of frontier disorder was the inadequacy of law enforcement agencies. If modern liberals complain about the low quality of today's police officers, at least they can be assured by these essays that considerable progress has been made in recent years. The frontier lawmen were both ignorant of the law and more concerned with the political activities necessary to retain office than in dispensing justice. Efficient law enforcement was hindered by low pay, small appropriations, unfit jails, and other apparatus necessary for proper control. "The pathetic point," the author has stated in his preface, "is that the American people never wanted law and order badly enough to support any pay for efficient enforcement."

Considerable research has gone into the writing of these essays. Dr. Jordan began work on the articles more than a quarter of a century ago and has searched court records, arrest books, and obscure state laws. A much more significant portion of the material comes from editorial comment in old newspapers. In this regard, the author has shown a predilection to concentrate on papers of the Mississippi valley and East coast, where in many cases the cited incidents might not properly fall under the definition of "Frontier" law and order. As a result, the volume tends to demonstrate the state of law and lawlessness in the nation during the 19th century.

In attempting to present a fair evaluation, this reviewer must admit to mixed emotions. The essays are well researched and very readable. The quality of the essays themselves vary greatly. Some are of real significance, and a few seem meaningless or even irrelevant. Perhaps the most annoying feature of the book, and one which might have been avoided by some editing, is the constant repetition. Since these articles were written for journals and pertain to the same general subject, one finds the same stories, quotes, and statistics appearing with disturbing regularity.

Despite such shortcomings, this chronicle of laws and lawlessness in the 19th century, which does not take the usual tack of lusty story-telling about bad men and good sheriffs, offers a background in helping to understand why the American people seem inclined to view law and order in a unique fashion.

Robert Trennert *is assistant professor of history at Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.*

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Nameless Valleys, Shining Mountains

REVIEWED BY GEORGE L. COLLINS

HOW MUCH MORE author John Milton has achieved than an annotated itinerary covering a foot-slogging journey from the south side of the Brooks Range, through the biggest and best of those high and mighty Alaska mountains, to the wide tundra plains and on to the Beaufort Sea, depends upon the reader.

Nameless Valleys, Shining Mountains by John P. Milton, drawings by Abigail Hadley *(Walker and Company, New York, 1970; 196 pp., intro., illus., index., epilogue, $7.50).*

No one who hasn't hiked in very remote, savage mountains, or hasn't been afraid of himself and his surroundings, can appreciate in the restrained and cultured terms of the journal the special incentive, outdoorsmanship, and guts it took for the three pilgrims to make the transect they accomplished. When they started they weren't sure they could do it. They decided to throw the tail in with the hide at midpoint, and we wonder how they squared themselves with the pilot who must have gone back to their starting point at the scheduled time and questioned their whereabouts.

This trip wasn't a stunt or grandstand play. It was a deliberate effort to see and feel the nature of the Arctic in our country, a search for revelation on the part of three very tough fellows, with John Milton leading, as to the lengths to which healthy, intelligent, sophisticated humans will go in the quest for discovery and adventure. In the outward sense, this means physical adventure in surroundings so remote from civilization that whatever is left in us of essential primitive animal strength and cunning for survival comes forth. And it means at the same time high adventure of the mind as part of the inner-man experience—an expression of the meaning of his life, and of all life and living of which he is a part. In all walks of life men and women face facts, of course, but we all like to ponder the calculated tests in dramatic situations.

The author editorializes on the dangers of industrial invasion of the Arctic, and those dangers are real. Arctic habitat conservationists in Canada and the United States have been working diligently for years toward an Arctic International Wildlife Range that would encompass an adequate portion of northwest Yukon and northeast Alaskan territories, to protect the country used immemorially by the Porcupine caribou herd. Numbering about one hundred and forty thousand animals, that herd is probably the healthiest and most self-contained of all caribou left. And the associated species of wildlife are numerous in that same habitat, presenting a magnificently balanced interrelationship of mammals, birds and even marine forms, because the region under consideration reaches out into the sea where whale, walrus, seal, polar bear, various fishes and birds are found. Indigenous man is there, too.

John Milton cut through the middle of this vast region, and the Alaska portion that has already been established as the Arctic National Wildlife Range by the United States. So he understands the fragility of it, how slow it is to regenerate, and how industrialists seeking to produce and export oil and gas—which of course is the talk of the Arctic today—must be made to understand their responsibilities to the habitats they are invading. Milton brings this out in various ways throughout the book, and the real worth of his journal to me is his conveyance of the sense of wilderness ethics with quiet literary force.

As one reads along and wonders what difficulties and joys of weather, brutal terrain, avalanches, animals and sore feet will be encountered next, he appreciates the three young men for their curiosity, their eagerness, their skills and genuine desire to share their love of the natural world with others, and to add something more to the sum total of our knowledge. In short, to conserve it.

George Collins *is vice-president of Conservation Associates, San Francisco.*

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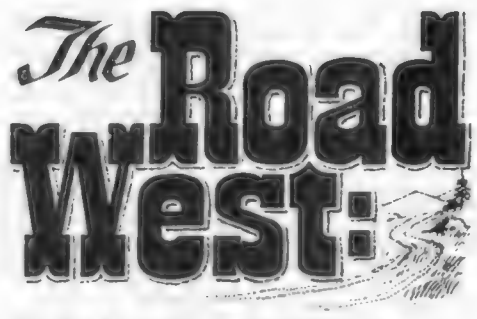

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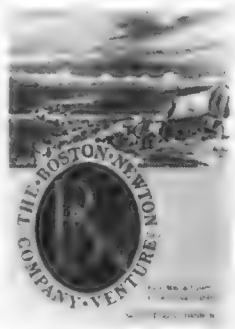

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Chasing Geronimo: The Journal of Leonard Wood, May-September, 1886

REVIEWED BY ROBERT HUHN JONES

LEONARD WOOD, the Harvard Medical School graduate who chose a career in the army, who was a candidate for the Republican Presidential nomination in 1920, and who served as a controversial Governor-General of the Philippines, kept a journal throughout much of his life in which he recorded his experiences and observations. Editor Jack C. Lane reports that the portion of the Wood diary for the Geronimo campaign was more detailed than that kept later, partly because "journal-keeping was still a novelty" to Wood.

Chasing Geronimo: The Journal of Leonard Wood, May–September, 1886 edited with introduction by Jack C. Lane *(University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 1970; 152 pp., illus., notes, biblio., index, $6.95).*

In a brief, but well-written introduction, Lane sketches out Wood's career, from his days at Harvard Medical School to appointments as captain in the Army Medical Corps, commander of the Rough Riders, major general in the Volunteer Army, brigadier general in the Regular Army, and then to the office of Chief of Staff—indeed a rapid military advancement.

The army attached Wood to Captain Henry Lawton's Troop B, 4th Cavalry, which soon proceeded to run down Geronimo. The Apaches, experts in guerilla warfare, often broke their treaty and left a trail of destruction in their wake. In the 1870's General George Crook managed to keep a degree of order among the Apaches, but after a tour of duty elsewhere, Crook had to return early in the 1880's to begin his pacification program anew. He was relatively successful from 1882 through 1886, when Geronimo left the reservation and embarked upon a bloody series of raids. At that point General Nelson A. Miles replaced Crook. An ambitious officer, Miles intended to use force, rather than diplomacy, to remove the Apaches from their familiar Southwest to unfamiliar Florida.

But Miles had to catch them before he could move them, and that task fell to Lawton—and Wood. Wood acted, throughout the campaign, more like a line officer than a doctor, frequently assuming and apparently welcoming command. In his diary, Wood traced the campaign trail with daily entries detailing the long, hot, rugged chase through southwestern Arizona and northern Mexico. Wood took pride in his physical fitness and his ability not only to keep up but even to outdo others, as Geronimo, never resting, led the army on a wild chase over formidable terrain. Geronimo fought no battles with the army and surrendered only when the chase proved too much for his band.

Wood's diary reported the steep canyon walls, the impossible trails, and the hardship of the march in graphic, though not literary, terms. The notes by Lane are excellent, but are difficult to use, placed as they are at the end of the text. The reader is forced to flip back and forth in order to follow the editorial commentary. The press would have done far better with this sort of material to have kept the notes with the text.

The book is reasonably free from major errors, but a number of the minor sort managed to slip through. None of these impair the quality of Lane's research or the overall care with which the Wood diary is presented. The diary itself occupies 87 pages, Lane's introduction and brief epilogue cover another 28 pages, while the notes account for 20 information-packed pages.

In retrospect, this little volume of reality, not romance, brings home to the reader the hard, dirty, persistent work of the army in the absence of fighting and battlefield heroics. Individual courage comes through, even Wood's, for he certainly failed as a model of modesty. He did, however, receive a medal of honor some years later for his efforts. Lane has made a contribution to the realism of the West with this account.

Robert Huhn Jones *is professor of history at Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio.*

C. Ben Ross and the New Deal in Idaho

REVIEWED BY RONALD H. LIMBAUGH

GOOD BOOKS on Idaho are almost as scarce as clean air in Los Angeles. That is why Professor Malone's first major work merits special attention and praise. The title is somewhat misleading,

C. Ben Ross and the New Deal in Idaho by Michael P. Malone, foreword by Robert E. Burke *(University of Washington Press, Seattle and London, 1970; 191 pp., intro., illus., biblio., $7.95).*

for the two brief chapters on New Deal policy and practice at the state level are not comprehensive but cover primarily the 1933–35 period. As political biography, however, the book is fresh and revealing. Using heretofore largely untapped historical resources, especially archival records at the Idaho State Historical Society, Professor Malone brings to sharp focus the career of one of the most kaleidoscopic characters to emerge from a region abundantly endowed with political local color.

A minor political figure nationally, Charles "Cowboy" Ben Ross nonetheless had wide appeal in a state largely bypassed by twentieth-century urban-industrial change. Full of folksy mannerisms and lofty platitudes, Ross was a maverick Democrat whose political power, like that of his more illustrious Republican contemporary, William E. Borah, depended more on personal charisma than on party support. Espousing old Populist-Progressive reform slogans, promising tax and debt relief for Idaho's farmers, and standing firm against labor, demon rum, and loose morals, he was elected governor in 1930 and served three successive two-year terms.

To discuss C. Ben Ross objectively is difficult even twenty-five years after his death, but Professor Malone's careful analysis avoids both superlatives and expletives. He shows the governor to have had the usual human foibles, including a large dose of vanity and a persistent bullheadedness, plus a few unusual ones, especially a penchant for unorthodox supernaturalism and a naïveté not ordinarily found among professional politicians. Despite considerable evidence, not overlooked in this book, that Ross frequently resorted to demagogic tactics in the manner of Huey Long and other nationally prominent politicos of the day, Malone refuses to engage in name-calling. The most he will concede is that Ross was an opportunist—a rather innocuous label in American politics.

As a states'-rights Democrat coming to power before the depression hit rock bottom in Idaho, Ross was ambivalent toward the New Deal. When times were roughest he welcomed federal economic assistance and cooperated wholeheartedly with programs he felt benefited the state. At the same time he distrusted federal bureaucracy and sniped at administration officials whenever it was politically expedient. His ultimate economic goal has since become part of the standard rhetoric of decentralization: federal funds locally administered. During his tenure, however, with the exception of highway appropriations, Ross had little control over federal programs —although he took credit for the New Deal's successes even while he was attacking its shortcomings. But it is clear from the evidence presented in this book that the New Deal did much more to facilitate Idaho's economic rehabilitation than did the independent reform panaceas of C. Ben Ross.

In larger perspective, Professor Malone sides with the moderates in the current debate over New Deal accomplishments. Although the New Deal, with or without Ross's blessing, expanded both national and state government functions in Idaho and made "promising starts" toward social justice, the result was only a "halfway revolution." The New Deal era as it affected the Gem State was an "interlude of liberal Democratic hegemony rather than a time of truly revolutionary change." Considering the snail's pace by which the region has been adjusting to the imperatives of American society since the 1930s, the author's conclusion is all the more convincing.

Ronald H. Limbaugh *is assistant professor of history at the University of the Pacific, Stockton, California.*

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Mormonism's Negro Policy

REVIEWED BY WILLIAM P. MACKINNON

WITH THE PASSAGE of more than 110 years, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints has successfully lived down the twin embarrassments of polygamy and the Mountain Meadows massacre, but has yet to resolve the persistent threat to its reputation posed by denial of both temple rites and the Mormon priesthood to blacks. Stephen G. Taggart's book attempts to do what he contends the church itself has never done, namely, to explain the origins of this exclusion. He argues that, with respect to the Negro issue, "the Church appears to be simply perpetuating a precedent of unspecied origin. To settle for no explanation at all is to be stifled into inaction on a subject which cries for a positive and moral resolution." Taggart marshals his evidence and presents his case in a logical, concise manner; as a result, the book's eighty-two brief pages can be digested in approximately an hour and are well worth the effort.

Mormonism's Negro Policy: Social and Historical Origins by Stephen G. Taggart *(University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City, 1970; 82 pp., foreword, $4.00).*

In summary, Taggart argues that denial of temple rites and the priesthood to blacks is a Mormon practice grounded in historical expediency rather than in doctrine or revelation. After noting that, upon organization in 1830, the church had no explicit doctrine regarding slavery or the status of Negro converts, Taggart reviews the intense pressure on Mormon colonies in Missouri, a slave state, and their unsuccessful attempts to alleviate this pressure by accommodating in an area that they considered negotiable: the Negro issue. In 1834, persecution in Missouri and a successful missionary effort in the South prompted Joseph Smith to render an informal, oral opinion that black members should be denied the priesthood, although at the time several Negro Mormons were probably already serving in that capacity. Subsequently, Smith extended and refined his position. He based his defense of exclusion, and of slavery itself, on the same arguments already developed by several southern Protestant denominations, i.e., the Biblical curses of color and servitude applicable to the descendants of Cain and Ham, and also on his own translation of Egyptian Papyri into *The Book of Abraham.*

For all of the book's positive qualities, there are a number of needless editorial lapses. For example, references in the foreword to Taggart's missionary service in Germany and studies in Salt Lake City, as well as repeated use of the phrase "the Church," make it apparent that the author was a Mormon in good standing, yet this basic item of background information is never explicitly stated. Similarly, the cover illustration, a nineteenth-century engraving depicting an attack by mounted raiders upon an encampment of men, women, and children, lacks identification, although it is presumably a rendering of Mormon persecution in Missouri. Finally, the circumstances under which the book itself was published in 1970 are not clear. Pamela R. Taggart, the author's wife and holder of the volume's copyright, states in the foreword that during the summer of 1969 her husband knew that he would not live to see his work published; however, it is only through a June 21, 1970 story by Wallace Turner, the New York *Times'* veteran Mormon-watcher, that we learn of Stephen G. Taggart's death on August 1, 1969.

Of far greater importance to an understanding of Taggart's message is the book's failure to provide perspective on two rudimentary points: the extent to which blacks are or are not currently L.D.S. church members, and the precise nature of the rites and privileges from which they are excluded. In 1965, Turner estimated that there were no more than two hundred Negro Mormons, and the *Times* has continued to use this figure despite the church's mushrooming membership which now totals about 2.8 million. Such a disproportionately small representation from the black community signals the need for a thorough analysis of Taggart's points, although it is

difficult, if not impossible, for the non-Mormon reader to appreciate the significance of priesthood-denial from the information at hand.

Much has happened that is relevant to the subject of this book during the relatively short period since Stephen G. Taggart's death. There was, of course, the key role of the black issue in the often violent deterioration in relations between Brigham Young University on the one hand and the Universities of Wyoming, New Mexico, Arizona, Washington, and Stanford on the other during the 1969–70 school year. Even more intriguing is the December, 1969, policy memorandum from the L.D.S. First Presidency, published in the *Times*. It states, among other things, that "until God reveals His will in this matter, to Him [the Church President] whom we sustain as a prophet, we are bound by that same will. Priesthood, when it is conferred on any man comes as a blessing from God, not of men. . . . The conferring of the priesthood must await His [God's] revelation." One wonders what Taggart's assessment of this position paper would have been, especially since Robert J. Mangum, commissioner of New York State's Division of Human Rights, characterized it as "a brutal insult to the integrity of black Americans."

Finally, the change in church leadership following the death of President David O. McKay in January, 1970, and the subsequent donation of thirty thousand dollars by the Latter-Day Saints to Salt Lake City's Church of God in Christ, a black Protestant congregation, have provided additional signs to be sifted. Taggart's study is valuable background for what is to come.

William P. MacKinnon *of Rye, New York, has performed extensive research on Utah and the Mormons, and has written for the* Utah Historical Quarterly.

Alfred Kroeber: A Personal Configuration by Theodora Kroeber *(University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1970; 292 pp., preface, illus., $7.95).*

REVIEWED BY JOHN GREENWAY

IN 1911 THE LAST Indian of California allowed himself to be captured by the people who had destroyed his tribe. This last Yana, called Ishi, was given immediately into the custody of Alfred Kroeber, who installed him in the Berkeley museum as a subject of dispassionate study and popular curiosity. Kroeber wrote little about Ishi, but Theodora, who met and married Kroeber after the Indian's death, drew from her husband's memory the materials for perhaps the greatest of anthropological biographies.

For ten years we have waited for Theodora Kroeber to write a commensurate biography of her husband, an incomparably better subject than Ishi. The Indian after all was only a survivor, an actuarial accident, while Kroeber was one of the three or four greatest anthropologists of all time.

At last we have the book, and what a shocking disappointment it is for those of us whose lesser destinies were so profoundly influenced by Kroeber. One is compelled to make the cruel but inescapable judgment that Theodora Kroeber found an ordinary Indian she had never seen far more inspiring than her husband of thirty years.

Yet Kroeber was a man of considerable accomplishments. He dominated the field of western anthropology, and his thousand-page *Handbook of the Indians of California* is absolutely the standard book. An indefatigable ethnographer, he published more than five hundred titles and trained many anthropologists now devoting their time to western studies. One measure of his greatness is that there is a building named in his honor at the University of California at Berkeley.

It is passing strange and inexpressibly disillusioning to see through his wife's eyes an unquestioned genius whom Fate dealt the best hand of cards ever held by a student of man. He was born to a family that imposed upon its offspring a life of scholarship as inescapable as politics is for children of the Hyannis Port Kennedys. His playmates were boys destined to be this nation's intellectual leaders.

As a young man his way was smoothed by patrons—Phoebe Hearst in California, Franz Boas in New York. Mrs. Hearst paid his early salaries and helped him build a museum; Boas, the founder and absolute monarch of American anthropology, ordained him the discipline's crown prince. But in Theodora's biography Kroeber is shown

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to have played his cards of life as badly as a child bored with Old Maid.

Kroeber comes out of the book a lesser man than he went in: a compulsive pipe-fondler; a beginner of many tasks and completer of few; a procrastinator who gave us the theses and antitheses of culture's strange behavior but rarely the syntheses; an aimless scholar who even abandoned his science for a time to set up practice as a psychoanalyst; an unfulfilled genius who fiddled away his introspective years conducting minuscule seminars and who died editing negligible California Indian myths he had collected sixty years earlier.

He not only ceased pursuit of answers to the grand questions he once asked, but apologized for them. One is reminded of Newton, squandering his last years in an absurd attempt to reconcile his mathematics with the Bible; of Wagner, properly revealed as a monster by Deems Taylor; of Bronislaw Malinowski, exposed by his incredibly indiscreet diary (published also by a second wife) as the living antithesis of all he taught us was the anthropologist's duty.

Once again we are brought sharply to understand that no great man can stand scrutiny, especially that of a scrivening wife. Men they were, no more; poor guides for followers who cannot bear seeing the human being who held the promethean pen. Biographies like this persuade us against reason that we ought not be made to see the small soul in the great mind. By their works alone we should know them.

John Greenway *is professor of history at the University of Colorado, Boulder.*

Manual of Brands and Marks by Manfred Wolfenstine, edited with introduction by Ramon F. Adams *(University of Oklahoma, Norman, 1970; 434 pp., intro., biblio., glossary, preface, plates of brands, $9.95).*

REVIEWED BY STANLEY NOYES

BRANDS AND MARKS are fascinating subjects. A person thinks of his own favorites because of their special meanings for him: the Double B brand on Bob Barmby's bucking stock; the Loving U's burned on H. H. Hap Magee's Mexican roping steers; or he thinks back to J. Frank Dobie's *The Longhorns* and the story of a brindled bull branded "Murder." In Oliver LaFarge's *A Pictorial History of the American Indian,* one photograph shows a young Apache woman without the tip of her nose—a mark indicating infidelity to her husband.

Although Mr. Wolfenstine limits himself to brands and marks on the hide of domestic animals, tracing brands back as far as the ancient Egyptians, his book is complete, perhaps exhaustive—a valuable reference work which will probably supersede other works on the subject. But it is important to note that this book is principally a manual, and not to be read primarily for entertainment.

In his excellent introduction to the book, editor Ramon F. Adams speaks of it as "highly technical." It is certainly that, as well as extremely detailed. For example, in the chapter "Branding Implements and Methods," we learn that "tattoo ink is an indelible black ink used in conjunction with tattooing tools and instruments. It is of a heavy, creamy consistency. A lighted flashlight held behind the ear will make reading of the tattoo mark in dark-eared animals much easier. The ink is supplied in 2- , 2½- , or 6-ounce jars; 2- or 4-ounce bottles, and 1-pint cans." The quoted passage illustrates Mr. Wolfenstine's conscientious determination to pin down precise details. But while the reader may be interested in, or grateful for, the hint about the flashlight, he will probably be indifferent to the sizes of the jars, bottles, or cans, in which the ink is sold.

A similar difficulty is sometimes found in Mr. Wolfenstine's analytical approach. He is partial to classification and his method is ordinarily suited to his subject matter. Yet this emphasis occasionally becomes top-heavy, as in his taxonomic groupings in the "History of Brands and Branding." These tables seem an unnecessary impediment to the reader. Similarly, the tables classifying American domestic breeds of animals might well have been placed in an appendix, making for greater continuity and a more readable text.

In the chapter "Design of Brands," an opposite problem arises. Here the reader wishes that the excellent plates of figures (brands, carcass brands, earmarks, etc.) in the index were adjacent to relevant passages in the text. For instance in the list of rules for reading brands, each rule has several examples, with each example illustrated by a figure in the index. But the figures are sometimes given out of numerical sequence, and the plates are not included in the regular pagination of the book. This makes for a slight confusion and means that the reader must continually keep his thumb in the index. Likewise, in "California Mission Brands" the plates belong with the text.

Marks indicating ownership of animals are described with equal thoroughness. Dewlaps, wattles, and earmarks for cattle (earmarks for sheep, goats, swine) are classified and discussed in detail. The cattle earmarks are of special interest, and again there are good, clear illustrations (in the index) to clarify the text. Anyone choosing a brand or an earmark could profit by examining this book.

Besides this—and beyond all objections raised—the manual is filled with interesting and often entertaining information. If you need to recall the differences between flying, tumbling, and swinging brands, you can refresh your memory with this book. If you don't know the differences between the lightning-crop earmark and the ching-gow jinglebob, you can find that information too. Although impatient readers may find this reference work overly technical and detailed, for many others *The Manual of Brands and Marks* will surely make—and leave—its own mark.

Stanley Noyes *of Santa Fe, New Mexico, is professor of English at the College of Santa Fe.*

Arizona: A Short History by Odie B. Faulk *(University of Oklahoma Press, 1970; 267 pages, photos, maps, index, biblio., $3.50).*

REVIEWED BY BERT M. FIREMAN

WHETHER THE condensed format of the *Reader's Digest* is suitable for the presentation of history seems to have been answered rather conclusively and negatively in the University of Oklahoma Press publication of the brightly-written *Arizona: A Short History.* The author is Professor Odie B. Faulk of Oklahoma State University (Stillwater), whose steady stream of books in recent years testifies both to his boundless energy and remarkable ability.

But haste is the enemy of accuracy,

(Continued on page 59)

In the Footsteps of Lewis & Clark

REVIEWED BY JON C. BOWER

WHERE LESSER MEN might have succumbed to the devilish whims of the Missouri, the roaring force of the Columbia, the murderous cold of the Rocky Mountains, or the ever-changing moods of Indians and weather, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark's Corps of Discovery labored its way across the continent twice with the loss of one man and the dismissal of two.

In the Footsteps of Lewis & Clark by Gerald S. Snyder, foreword by Donald Jackson; photographs by Dick Durrance II, illustrations by Richard Schlecht *(National Geographic Society, Washington, D.C., 1970; 215 pp., maps, $4.25).*

The flavor of their amazing feats is captured in Gerald S. Snyder's *In the Footsteps of Lewis and Clark*. Snyder, along with his wife and two children, followed the footsteps of the two great explorers in every feasible way. By raft, canoe, flatboat, horseback, foot, and car, they ferreted out much of the trail first made 166 years ago. Many of the trails were dim, if not completely lost, but much of the land remained much as it was in Lewis and Clark's time.

The book is essentially an excellent summary of Lewis and Clark's epic journey. Flavored with many of the entries from the explorers' own journals, Snyder's books takes the reader along on not one but two crossings of the United States. One crossing, the main one, shows the route fraught with dangers and joys that can only be felt by a pioneer. One can almost share the jubilation of the taciturn Lewis as he, alone save for the company of his dog, viewed the vast expanse of prairies no longer to be seen. Well we might marvel at the seeming simplicity of William Clark's atrocious spelling when describing his "vast, Hazidous, and fatiguing enterprise," yet we can feel perhaps some of the sincere joy and wonder which Clark felt as he penned lines which described something never before seen.

The second crossing which is shown in this fine volume is a labor of love. It becomes obvious that Gerald Snyder and his family were seeking in some way to relive and become a part of that historical trek. It is nearly impossible for modern man to feel what Lewis and Clark felt. To some degree we felt it when our astronauts landed on the moon. Yet science had pretty much foretold what they were to find. This is not the case with Lewis and Clark. I don't suppose that they thought they would encounter strange unknown monsters, and yet the theretofore unknown grizzly bears must have seemed as horrible to them as green men would have been to the astronauts. Lewis and Clark were to pass through geologic formations which could rival the moon in their eerie magnificence.

"Saleing on Dry land in every sence of the word," wrote Clark after the trip around the Great Falls of the Missouri.

Gerald Snyder and his family were not trying to recapture the feeling of exploration and discovery, rather they were trying to re-create a valuable page of our heritage. In its own small way, their journey was an epic—an epic back into time but not removed from the ever-present reminder that that time is no more.

Illustrated by the timely works of such artists as George Catlin, Alfred Jacob Miller, Karl Bodmer, and Charles M. Russell as well as the excellent contemporary work of artist Richard Schlecht and photographer Dick Durrance II, *In the Footsteps of Lewis and Clark* offers a rich insight into the past. But more, Snyder's book concerns itself with acquainting the general public with the ever-present danger which man's progress has created, the destruction of his heritage. Perhaps this is best shown by a color photograph at the end of the book of a fine sculpture of Blackfoot warriors running free over the land that was theirs. It shows a glorious sunset the like of which may have been seen by the explorers who ventured toward the Pacific in 1804. Lastly it shows another sunset, glorious in color, but not in portent. It is a sunset clouded by the smoke of an industrial plant.

The west of Lewis and Clark is obviously gone. The heritage they left behind remains—so long as we care enough to preserve it. It is as Gerald Snyder said, "Others would follow. But Lewis and Clark had been the first. And never again would the West be the same."

Jon C. Bower *of Steamboat Springs, Colorado, is a folksinger and writer of western history.*

XUM

BOOKS IN BRIEF

BY JANE M. OFFERS

Between These Mountains: History of Birch Creek Valley, Idaho by Pearl M. Oberg *(Exposition Press, New York, 1970; 199 pp., intro., illus., notes, index, $6.50).*

An authentic and colorful account of the rise and decline of Birch Creek Valley, Idaho, now an almost forgotten community. Discusses the miners, homesteaders, ranchers, traders, and fortune hunters attracted by the rich mineral deposits in the valley, in addition to the Nez Percé Indian incident.

The Pueblo Revolt by Robert Silverburg *(Weybright and Talley, New York, 1970; 216 pp., maps, biblio., index, $6.95).*

Three hundred years ago, the Pueblo Indians of northern New Mexico successfully revolted against their Spanish overlords. This carefully organized victory was typical of the achievements of the Pueblo civilization, told in terms of a complex social structure, a deep and involved religion, and at one time, the world's largest apartment houses.

Utah-Colorado hills. The book provides insight into the driving compulsion that plagues prospectors of all eras.

Medicine Lodge: The Story of a Kansas Frontier Town by Nellie S. Yost with an introduction by Don Russell *(Swallow Press, Chicago, 1970; 237 pp., illus., appen., notes, index, $6.00).*

The town is a microcosm of frontier towns in nineteenth century America. Its story contains the usual Indians, pioneers, cattle violence, etc., but also includes a unique legend, burnings at the stake, flood and tornado havoc, and a Carry Nation controversy. This book about a local habitation transcends the local in interest.

A Novelist in the Making: Frank Norris edited by James D. Hart *(Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1970; 596 pp., intro., notes, $12.50).*

When novelist Norris was a student at Harvard, he conceived the seminal ideas that later brought him fame as one of the most outstanding and socially-conscious writers of the 1890s. The book is based

Letters From California by William R. Garner, edited with notes by Donald M. Craig *(University of California Press, Berkeley & Los Angeles, 1970; 262 pp., intro., illus., biblio., appen., index, $8.95).*

California living before the gold rush is described in these letters of an expatriate Englishman and citizen of Monterey. Garner reports on the politics, mining, and sports of the early *californios;* he gossips about their methods of capturing wild horses, bull and bear baiting practices, a horseback wedding, Christmas customs, and pioneer furniture. The colorful letters are useful first-hand sources.

White Churches of the Plains: Examples from Colorado by Robert Hickman Adams *(Colorado Associated University Press, Boulder, 1970; 80 pp., foreword, photo., $9.75).*

Turn a photographer loose on the white wooden churches of eastern Colorado, and the result is a pleasing and valuable addition to American architectural history. Through a lens, Adams captures the simple Victorian styling of the buildings and conveys a broader sense of the strong religious faith they symbolize.

In the Days of Victorio: Recollections of a Warm Springs Apache by Eve Ball, narrated by James Kaywaykla *(University of Arizona, Tucson, 1970; 222 pp., intro., illus., maps, biblio., notes, index,*

Arizona: A Short History

(Continued from page 56)

and condensation leads to omissions, inadequate explanations, oversimplification, and dehumanization of historical events. It is impossible to present an understandable picture of four centuries of dramatic history—from Marcos de Niza in 1539 to Barry Goldwater in 1964—in 241 tiny pages of text, maps, and photographs, even when the text is well-written, the maps are helpful if sketchy, the photos are few but good.

Fifty-eight pages are given to the Spanish-Mexican attempts to explore the Southwest, colonize, Christianize, and conquer the Indians between 1540 and 1848. As many books on the subject leave it incomplete.

Even a smaller section of 44 pages attempts to synthesize the dynamic growth of Arizona since it achieved statehood in 1912, and this section, according to the book jacket blurb, was also to provide "a look at the present, and an overview of its (Arizona's) potential." These pledges were never fulfilled.

The in-between territorial period from the Mexican War to Valentine's Day of 1912 was massacred in 136 pages as surely as were 108 Aravaipa Apache Indians at Camp Grant in 1871, a massacre that led President Grant to the assignment of a peace commission to the Far West.

None of these three skimpy sections of the book is given the treatment expected of the author's writing ability and the publisher's reputation. Like English potatoes, the content was unfortunately boiled into lifelessness.

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LION AT BAY

(Continued from page 35)

when Schary himself was dumped.

MGM was not alone. Hollywood's version of the gold rush, like the original article, was coming to an end. The studios fumbled through the postwar years like dinosaurs out of their time; the machinery of the system had become arthritic and unresponsive, a flivver in the age of the atom, as noted by Bosley Crowther in his history of MGM, *The Lion's Share:* "A decline in the quality of movies during the war years, when talent was tight and the demands of the customers were casual, was unavoidable. But the studios were slow and gravely sluggish in getting back into prewar form. They generally persisted in the usual attitude of sublime complacency until the horses were stolen and the wolves were prowling outside the stable doors."

The most obvious threat to the studio system was the emergence of television at the end of the 1940s. After a period of pretending the whole nasty business would go away if it was ignored, the studios reacted characteristically by leaping from apathy to hysteria, investing millions in gimmicky processes like 3-D and Cinemascope, and in a dismal series of ruinously expensive super-colossal spectacles.

But the real specter that haunted the studio system was the very phenomenon on which an empire had been built: the movie audience itself. Tempered and perhaps sophisticated by the savagery of war, that audience had little room in its heart—or pocket—for the simple, and often simpleminded production values that still dominated the studio industry. Inexorably, it turned from studio films to independent productions filmed outside studio control and released through equally independent distributing agencies. By the end of the 1960s, the new system had grown like a healthy cancer. In 1946, 90 percent of all the films produced in the United States had been made in Hollywood studios; in 1969, less than one in every six had been made at any one of the thirty-two studios in the Los Angeles area. In fact, 1969 can be pinpointed as the climactic year in the disintegration of the studio system, when a spate of overproduction resulted in tremendous monetary losses.

"Beverly Hills," one observer commented, "is a disaster area." Into that disaster area moved the Big Money Men like a corps of Red Cross volunteers. Paramount was one of the first to go, purchased at the end of the year by Gulf and Western Industries. The hard-nosed new order of things was articulated in *Business Week* by Charles G. Blundorn, chief executive of Gulf and Western and new president of Paramount Pictures, as he coldly sniped at the industry's oldest shibboleth: "You get from these big stars a document of conditions on how many hours they'll work, how many days of the week, what they'll do and won't do. It's like a declaration of independence. Well, who needs them? With today's young audiences, names won't sell a picture anymore."

MGM suffered a like fate. In 1969 Kirk Kerkorian, an entrepreneur with interests in airlines, hotels, and Las Vegas gambling (and with, some rumors had it, the backing of Aristotle Onassis), stepped in and picked up 33 percent of the company's common stock—enough to give him a controlling interest. He forthwith placed James T. Aubry, Jr. (his cool toughness while heading up CBS-TV had earned Aubry the sobriquet of the "Smiling Cobra") as studio head, announced that all but 30 of the 183 acres the studio owned in Culver City would be sold off to developers, and turned over the company's forty-five-year collection of props, equipment, and costumes to the David Weisz Company, an international auction house, for $1.4 million. In April, 1970, the auction company proclaimed that a public sale of "An unprecedented inventory of the largest collection of motion picture memorabilia ever assembled," as the press releases put it, would be held on Lot 1 of the Culver City studio in May. The internal organs of MGM's physical plant were going to be yanked out and sold to the highest bidder.

"I am lonely for Leo the Lion," Mayer said whimsically in 1957. He was then engaged in one of several attempts to regain his crown; but the effort failed, and by the end of the year Louis B. Mayer was dead.

Continued on page 60

XUM

IT WAS LIKE WANDERING in the several attics of some demented god of pack rats; the detritus from nearly every civilization in the history of man—and some out of purest imagination—seemed to have been gathered into four huge sound stages. You felt slightly embarrassed to be there, as if you had interrupted the spring housecleaning of the biggest house in the world. MGM never threw *anything* away.

Most of the stuff in three of the four sound stages was furniture: couches, chairs, dressing tables, dinner tables, end tables, conference tables, coffee tables, kitchen tables, brass beds, canopy beds, barber chairs, clocks, bric-a-brac, hat racks, umbrella stands, mirrors, commodes, bathtubs, dressers, bureaus, cobbler's benches, stoves, roll-top desks, *escritoires*, lamps, chandeliers, sconces, candelabra, scattered musical instruments, and a throne or two tossed in for good measure.

It was piled up and jammed together, hung from the walls and dangled from the ceilings of the great rooms, and it represented in style everything from French Period to early motel. Much of it was exquisite; most of it was hopeless junk, rendered attractive merely because it had been touched briefly by the magic of movies. On the walls hung animal heads whose hides were peeling off in scabrous patches, and some of the worst oil paintings, mostly portraits, ever executed by the hand of man. One exception was the "good" portrait from *The Portrait of Dorian Grey;* the "bad" portrait, the one that exposed all the hideous effects of a sinful life, was missing. "They lost it," a guard said.

At one end of Stage 15 were displayed a few of the more dramatic of the 350,000 costumes being offered for sale; they had formerly graced the curves of such as Judy Garland, Ingrid Bergman, Katherine Hepburn, Greer Garson, and Lana Turner, and the manly frames of such as Clark Gable, Peter Ustinov, Charles Laughton, James Stewart, George Sanders, Walter Pidgeon, and Spencer Tracy. Mounted alluringly on one costume panel was the gossamer nightgown Elizabeth Taylor had worn in *Raintree County,* in the scene where she bounced up and down on the bed and threw her childhood dolls at Montgomery Clift; it was so close you could touch the material, losing yourself in recollection. . . .

Stage 8 featured several hundred models that had been used for special effects through the years. Miniature automobiles of every make were on hand, and miniature trains from every epoch—streamliners, diamond-stack locomotives, coaches (some of them complete with miniature people in the miniature seats), and cabooses. In one corner was stacked an indiscriminate pile of engines and freight cars, like a tiny version of history's worst train wreck. Overhead, model airplanes flew from every angle, and mounted in odd corners of the room were model ships. But the most impressive collection on Stage 8 was weaponry: spears, bows and arrows, knives, clubs, axes, swords, maces, scimitars, lances, pikes, armor, shields, and guns—six-guns, muskets, rifles, shotguns, tommy guns, machine guns, a gatling gun, .38s, .45s, dueling pistols, derringers, and guns that never were by land or sea—enough weaponry, in short, to represent civilization's growth from that dim moment in the unimaginable past when a caveman decided to use something other than a rock to bash in the head of his neighbor.

Outside on Lot 1, as well as on Lots 2, 3, and 5, was parked machinery sufficient to illustrate a *Pictorial History of the Wheel:* chariots from both the silent and the modern versions of *Ben Hur,* stagecoaches, surreys, two coronation coaches, buckboards, prairie schooners, freight wagons, broughams, horse-drawn London cabs, hansom cabs, Model-Ts, Locomobiles, a Stanley Steamer, Fords, Plymouths, Buicks, Chevrolets, the "Rah! Rah!" hot rod from the *Andy Hardy* series, a Sherman tank, German half-tracks, and a genuine working locomotive, complete with cars, that had been built in 1873.

The naval contingent of human history was represented by no less than three different-sized models—one of them huge—of the barque featured in *Green Dolphin Street;* by models of the *Mayflower,* Roman slave ships, fighting ships from the naval scenes in the modern *Ben Hur,* battleships used in sundry World War II epics, and, sitting in a desultory fake lagoon in front of a fake waterfront on Lot 5, the two most impressive items—a real three-masted schooner and the *Cotton Blossom,* a Mississippi sternwheeler used in *Showboat.*

This unlikely hodgepodge collection was put on public exhibition for a week preceding the auction, and one hundred thousand people came to ogle it, paw over it, estimate its worth, or simply rummage around in memory: housewives in stretch pants and curlers, sailors, movie stars, television commentators, brokers, reporters and photographers, junk dealers, memorabilia collectors, antique dealers, and interior decorators from every corner of the land. Driving the more than seventy-five special guards frantic, they clambered over everything like beetles on a corpse, ignoring KEEP OUT and DO NOT TOUCH signs with a singlemindedness reminiscent of a mob scene from *Quo Vadis?* A woman on one of the stages picked up a small mantel clock (PLEASE DO NOT HANDLE) and shook it angrily. "A lot of this stuff doesn't have *works* in it," she complained to her husband, as if she expected the stuff of dreams to have substance.

On Saturday, May 2, workmen cleared out Stage 27 and put in enough wooden seats to hold three thousand bidders, and the next morning at ten o'clock the auction started. The first of 11,855 individual colored slides was flashed on a screen in front of the audience, and the auction-master's voice began a steady yammering that would continue off and on every day for the next three weeks, while the cry of "Sold!" would echo until the last kitchen chair and six-gun had been scattered across the country. Some of the items went for startling prices—for example, Charleton Heston's chariot from *Ben Hur* for $2,600. But the most startling, and in a way the most poignant, sale of them all was Judy Garland's magic slippers from *The Wizard of Oz,* which were sold for $15,000 to a "Southern California millionaire."

So much for the bits and pieces of an institution's life.

In 1951, David Selznick, Mayer's son-in-law and the producer of *Gone with the Wind,* made a prophetic statement about his crippled industry to Ben Hecht: "Hollywood's like Egypt," he said, "full of crumbled pyramids. It'll never come back. It'll just keep on crumbling until finally the wind blows the last studio prop across the sands."

The outsized metaphor came naturally to a man who had spent the bulk of his adult life in a world ruled by metaphor, and he was right. The Hollywood that he and Hecht had known has now gone the way of the whooping crane. The MGM auction was more than a sale; it was a genuine wake for the make-believe land of celluloid dreams.

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THE LEGENDARY CONCORDS

(Continued from page 17)

servative artisans, intensely proud of their skills, would have had it no other way.

Only quality stock was used, and it took an amazing amount to construct a coach, especially a big twelve-passenger mail stage or a hotel omnibus. Abbott-Downing men selected white ash and oak in the field and cut and hauled it to the yard, where it was seasoned until just right. The oak was sawed, split and stacked for wheel spokes. Elm—tough, heavy, and hard—was used for hubs, and fine springy hickory for fellies. The thin, curved body panels were painstakingly steamed basswood sheets fixed to ash frames. All planking was fashioned from the clearest white pine and birch available. Great quantities of ironwork were used in reinforcement, angle brackets, tires, and the like. The design feature that distinguished Concord coaches was the thorough-brace—long multiple straps of leather running from front to rear axle on each side—on which the body was suspended. To complete these thorough-braces, the front and rear boots, and the upholstery, required twelve to fourteen of the best ox or steer hides.

There is no doubt that the Concords were the toughest, ruggedest coaches on those miserable roads of the 1800s. But they were also the handsomest and won the admiration of drivers, passengers, owners, and bystanders alike. Their bright colors, artwork, and gold leaf would make any present-day hot rodder blink. The base colors for the bodies were red, yellow, blue, or green. Superimposed on this was gilt ornamentation ranging from simple striping to incredibly intricate scrollwork. The name of the operator was usually blocked in above the door on each side, and on each door was a scene painted in oils by an expert illustrator. Sometimes a portrait of a famous person was painted on the footboard or on each side of the driver's seat. After all the decorating was done, two or more coats of handrubbed varnish were applied over the whole coach. The wheels were done in a contrasting color, often yellow, with pinstriping on the spokes and hubs.

THE CONCORDS were expensive vehicles, especially for those times. A twelve-passenger mail coach of the seventies, for example, carried a base price of $1,050. And just as in today's automobile market, there were lists of optional extras and deductions. If the customer had no need of oil lamps, eight dollars was taken off the price. Interestingly, those same lamps today are worth perhaps two hundred dollars a pair. The ornamentation schedule was virtually open-ended, and the buyer could spend a small fortune if he so chose. The hotel coach was a bit more luxurious, with quarter windows and plush lining available. And this in an age where board seats were the rule.

For most of the hotel trade, there was no coach but the Concord. The Porter Palmer House in Chicago had several canary yellow rigs; the Highland and Alpine Houses, along with many others, ran them in the White Mountains of New Hampshire; and they were immensely popular in all the resort areas. Ben Holladay ran a large number of them, as did the famed Butterfield Overland Despatch Company, and Wells, Fargo and Company reputedly had as many as a thousand coaches and mud wagons, a sturdier and more utilitarian version of the coach.

In the weekly *Register* of Central City, Colorado, the following advertisement appeared on March 18, 1874: "Messrs. M. F. Bebee & Co., will, on next Monday, commence running a six-horse Concord Coach from Central to Caribou. Office at the office of the Teller House, where tickets may be procured. Coach will leave here at 8 A.M. and arrive here in time for dinner. Mr. Geo. A. Bruce will handle the ribbons, and is one of the men who know how to do it. Fred Conant will sell tickets at Black Hawk. The proprietors of the line are so well known, that it is only to strangers that it is necessary to say that they are entirely reliable. Their references are: N. P. Hill, Black Hawk; Rocky Mountain Bank, First National Bank, Sessler and Saur, John Best, Raworth and Lake, J. O. Reynolds, Central."

The products of Abbott and Downing were also the choice of high officials, dignitaries, potentates, and other notables all over the world. Concord coaches, usually done up in grand style, were shipped to Mexico and South America, Australia, Africa, and Europe, as well as to England and Canada. Fittingly, when Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh visited Canada in 1951, they were squired about in a Concord mail coach that had seen years of service in Nova Scotia on the Halifax-Truro-Pictou run.

Probably the best known of all the Concord coaches was the Deadwood Stage of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. It was built in 1863 and shipped the next year to the Pioneer Stage Company of California. After a hazardous trip around the Horn in the clipper ship *General Grant,* it ran several years between San Francisco and the gold fields. Later transferred

XUM

to Wyoming, it covered the Deadwood-Laramie-Cheyenne route. In 1876 it was robbed and abandoned in a canyon in the Rockies. Buffalo Bill, just returned from a scalp-hunting foray, heard of the incident and set out to find the coach. He was successful, and it became a main attraction in his show. Eventually old #150 fell apart from continued hard usage, and no one knows what became of it.

As the twentieth century approached and railroading soared toward its zenith, the coach business began to diminish. Lewis Downing had died in 1873, and the company was taken over by his sons, Lewis, Jr., and Alonzo. Despite diversification into ambulances, gun carriages, and circus and specialty wagons, the company received fewer and fewer orders. With the advent of the automobile, they went into the manufacture of truck bodies and the assembling of trucks and fire engines. But the Abbott-Downing Company was not attuned to this kind of transportation, and by 1920 it was finished. When Lewis, Jr., died, the assets of the company passed through several hands. Finally, in 1945, Elmer Jones, then president of Wells Fargo, bought the name.

But there are yet a few of the handsome old Concords around. The New Hampshire Historical Society maintains a beautifully restored one in its rotunda, as does the Wells Fargo Bank in San Francisco. The Smithsonian Institution displays one in original condition given them by Will Rogers, and there are a few more scattered about the country.

If you chance to see a Concord coach, stand before it and let your mind run back to Lewis Downing's day, when it was a way of life. You can easily conjure up the scene that Thoreau wrote of on his trip along the Concord River.

"Sometimes we saw the river road a quarter or half a mile distant, and the particolored Concord stage, with its cloud of dust, its van of earnest traveling faces, and its rear of dusty trunks, reminding us that the country had its places of rendezvous for restless Yankee men."

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MIDAS OF NEW MEXICO

(Continued from page 9)

of New Mexico, touched it. He bought in with the three discoverers and formed a mining company around the Aztec.

Boomtowns sprouted like mushrooms on Maxwell's land. Everyone cried for lumber to build saloons, stores, and homes —usually in that order. The mines needed lumber for shoring, sluices, flumes, tool sheds, and mills. Right on cue, Maxwell established the Maxwell Lumber Company, and the steam sawmills hummed almost around the clock.

Half-way into the seventies the Aztec continued to be Maxwell's best friend and provider, for his majority share averaged $4,000 weekly. He might have "smiled all the way to the bank," but there wasn't a bank within four hundred miles. Instead Maxwell banked in a massive bureau at the manor.

"Many a time," recalled Col. Edward H. Bergman in 1895, "I have seen Mack—that's what we usually called him—go to that bureau, pull out the lower drawer and toss in a roll of bills. Gold, silver, paper currency, vouchers, and drafts went in there all together, and the drawer was left unlocked. It was said that the bureau drawer often contained as much as thirty thousand dollars. But money came easily and it went freely.

"At the time we were partners in the Aztec mine, I used to bring down to the ranch every Sunday night from four hundred to five hundred ounces of gold to divide with him, and at the time it was worth twenty-two dollars an ounce. He furnished supplies to the government, ran a mill, and a store, had flocks of sheep, from which he got a great wool clip, and drew on herds of cattle which were unnumbered. Yet he was always more or less embarrassed financially."

MAXWELL WAS A QUIET MAN, unassuming, charitable, and disinclined to anger or violence. However, his temper fired instantly when he learned that Virginia, one of his five daughters, had secretly married an army officer. And he fumed hotter than the tip of his panatella upon further intelligence that the clandestine ceremony had been committed right under his moustache—or, more correctly, right *above* his moustache.

Virginia Maxwell and Capt. Alexander Keyes had been joined in holy matrimony on the third floor of Maxwell's Aztec Grist Mill on March 30, 1870, while papa labored below passing out the weekly flour rations to the Indians! The witnesses were Maxwell's miller Isaiah Rinehardt and his wife.

Maxwell vowed he would put the captain at the cracking end of a bullwhip, and that the most *un*reverend Reverend Thomas Harwood, who conspired to tie the nuptial knot, would be taken care of in a duel. But like his cigars, Maxwell's wrath burned out. He forgave and gave a $10,000 dowry.

That year of 1870 was an extraordinarily eventful one for Maxwell. He sold the grant. The Duke of Cimarron optioned his empire for $12,000 to a syndicate of three Colorado and New Mexico men. They, with Maxwell's knowledge, were negotiating with an English combine for immediate resale.

After taking the option on April 30, the Americans buck-passed it to the English capitalists for $1,350,000. They quickly slapped a $3,500,000 mortgage on the property. Subsequently, a world-wide "hot-tip" speculation in the stocks and bonds scheme produced millions for the promoters, but piñon nuts for the investors—an unforeseen outcome for the executives of the Maxwell Land Grant & Railway Company.

But Maxwell, gaining $650,000 from his sale, laughed all the way to his bureau drawer with the money. Having disposed of the grant and renounced his "Land Baron" title, Maxwell poked new irons into the fire.

On the evening of September 3, 1870, Maxwell's smoke-clouded sanctum in the Cimarron manor (the manor had been excluded from the grant sale) was the scene of a historic inci-

dent: the founding of the First National Bank of Santa Fe, the first such institution in the New Mexico and Arizona Territories. Maxwell furnished all the capital, $150,000, and elected himself president. The four directors and stockholders, including his son Peter, toasted the "Father of Banking in the Southwest" with his own champagne.

Three months later, following issuance of National Bank Charter No. 1750, the directors rented a store under the portal of the adobe Fernando Delgado building for thirty dollars a month. The most expensive item was a four-hundred-dollar safe from Spiegelberg Brothers. Stock certificates and bank stationery were engraved with a portrait of President Maxwell, a half-smoked cigar clenched in his teeth.

In addition to the Cimarron manor, Maxwell had retained a number of properties when he sold the grant. These he later disposed of, traveling to New York City to close the deal. The St. Louis *Globe-Democrat* related an incident from that trip which illumines a side of Maxwell's character. The land baron from New Mexico received a $75,000 credit at a bank.

"How much will you take with you?" asked the cashier.

"You may give me $50,000," was the reply.

The cashier looked at the Duke a moment and then handed out the package of bills. Maxwell stuffed them into a pair of saddlebags hanging on his arm and walked out onto Wall Street. Returning to his uptown hotel and placing the saddlebags on the counter, he asked the clerk to put them away. That functionary, with a careless glance at them, took the bags and hurled them under a desk. Ten days went by. One morning, Maxwell came downstairs, ran his thumb and forefinger into his vest pocket and found it empty.

"Give me those saddlebags," he said to the clerk.

The bags were fished out from under the desk and put on the counter. Maxwell opened them and drew out package after package of bills before the eyes of the astonished clerk. Before he left New York City, Maxwell had spent $40,000 on presents for friends in New Mexico.

Maxwell's First National Bank of Santa Fe opened its doors on April 18, 1871, with $125,000 brought from Washington in three ambulances guarded by twenty-five soldiers. But its success was in doubt from the beginning. A group of influential Santa Fe businessmen, some of them former associates of Maxwell who had not been included in his bank venture, had announced the creation of a rival institution, the National Bank of New Mexico. This news caused many potential depositors to withhold their support from Maxwell's bank—a crippling blow. When, at the same time, Maxwell was clobbered by a $200,000 bond loss in the Texas & Pacific Railway Company, he accepted the recommendation of his advisors and sold his bank interests to his competitors.

At age 54, Maxwell still had enough guts and gold left to start all over again. He looked back with nostalgia at his early ranching days. That's where his heart was, and he galloped off to catch up with it. At government auction, Maxwell obtained Fort Sumner. (The fort had been demilitarized after the government's failure to contain and "civilize" the nearly nine thousand Navajos and Apaches Kit Carson had rounded up at the Bosque Rodondo in 1864.) He converted the officers' quarters into a twenty-room house modestly reminiscent of the manors at Rayado and Cimarron. Income from assorted grant properties and promissory notes enabled him to cultivate a farm and stock his *rancho* with thousands of head of cattle and sheep, just as in the good old Cimarron days. And the visits of Luz's and Lucien's six children and twenty-one grandchildren made the old barracks house sound as if the troops had returned.

On July 25, 1875, the Duke was dead. Next day, as Maxwell's coffin sank among the purple verbena of the military cemetery, faithful Luz stood in the shade, as she had always proudly remained in the shadow of her gringo husband.

Jesus Silva, Maxwell's old *mayordomo*, observed the service with dry eyes. He whispered his own eulogy. How is it possible for that one small grave to contain a trapper, hunter, mountain man, army scout, Indian fighter, Indian trader, Indian agent, "Great Uncle, Brother, Father" to the Ute and Apache, progressive farmer, cattle rancher, sheepman, breeder of thoroughbreds, miner, judge, millionaire, "Duke," land baron, bank president . . . ?

Maxwell never knew exactly how much land had been in his barony. Two years after his death, the U.S. surveyor-general contracted a survey of the grant. A month's field work by two surveyors determined that the former Maxwell domain covered 1,714,764 acres—more land than any individual in North America has ever owned.

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XUM

THE WEST'S GUNMEN: I

(Continued from page 15)

attractiveness of style and story, rather than by measured scholarship. The three placed too much faith in reminiscences and were the victims of their own prejudices—and occasionally handicaps—which they could not control.

They were not, however, unmindful of history or malevolent creators of a deliberately false myth. That which seems patently false today was once eminently believable. And in light of the meager accomplishments of more recent writing, the temptation is to accord them more credit than most have been willing to concede. It is very easy to point out the mistakes of the legend-makers from the viewpoint of three decades of research by a whole generation of students with the benefits of improved access to records as well as past mistakes, but it is almost ludicrous to condemn them for not anticipating everything that has been done since.

The impact of the legend-makers on the writing of western history was profound. They were followed by others who popularized their heroes for readers who had never heard of Wilstach or Lake and cared nothing for history as such. Over the years the mystique of the gunfighter grew, and the gross distortions of fact and interpretation may lie more with the latter-day disciples of the legend-makers than with the original writers who have borne the brunt of criticism. That the views of the legend-makers were believable is attested by the fact that they continued to dominate more serious writing in the field for many years.

At mid-century, writing on the Western gunfighter, with few exceptions, was devoid of any serious inquiry into the basic historicity of the gunman, or, indeed, into the fundamental elements of the myth. There were critics, to be sure, but even they acquiesced in the basic image, concentrating instead on the credibility of the legendary characters themselves. That Lake, Connelley, and Burns were increasingly discredited was more the result of their own obvious shortcomings, their own penchant for hero worship, than the superiority or reliability of their critics. The imposing superstructure of the myth remained intact. Lake, Burns, and Connelley had assured the continuing presence of the mythical gunfighter in the historical literature of the West—an impressive accomplishment. The tragedy is that they called it history.

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Idaho State University
University of Illinois
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Iowa State University
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Michigan State University
Midwestern College
Miami University of Ohio
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University of Missouri
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University of Nebraska at Omaha
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The Newberry Library
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University of New Mexico
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Saint Louis University
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University of Southern California
Stanford University
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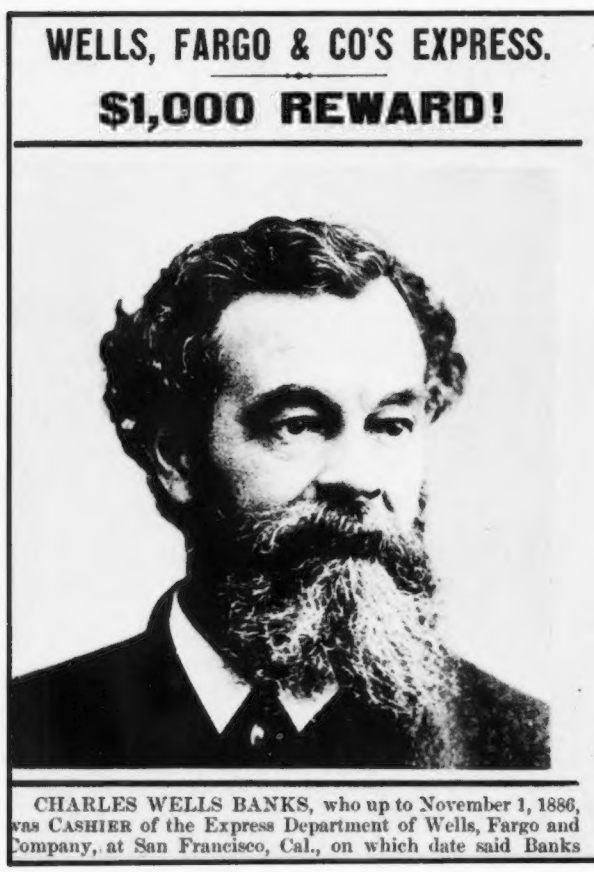

CHARLES WELLS BANKS, who up to November 1, 1886, was CASHIER of the Express Department of Wells, Fargo and Company, at San Francisco, Cal., on which date said Banks

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